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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

MAY 1991 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

Politically Correct Correctives

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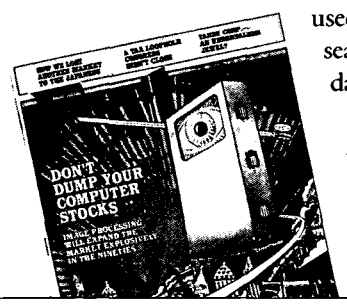

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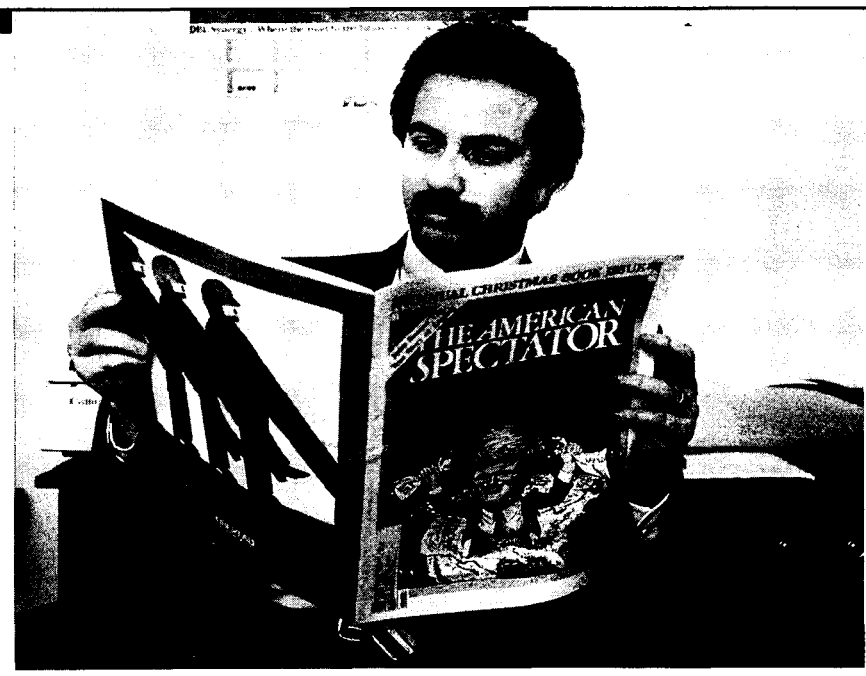

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Arab-Moslem Fanaticism and Intransigence

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For the last five decades, the world has been convinced, mostly because of unrelenting Arab propaganda, that the conflict between Israel and the "Palestinians" is the root cause of the constant turmoil in the Middle East and that Israel should make "concessions" to the Arabs. But is that the *real* reason for the turmoil and for the violence? Or is there another, much deeper, more fundamental reason behind it?

What are the facts?

■ We Americans are reluctant to criticize or even to discuss the religions of others. We consider it a very personal matter. But the profound hatred of the Moslem Arab world against the West, especially against the United States (the "Great Satan") and Israel (the "Little Satan") can only be explained by trying to comprehend the psychology and the principal religious tenets of Islam. Islam is a world-wide religion, but it originated in Arabia and it survives in Arabia in its purest and most virulent form. The policies of the Arab countries are totally dominated by Islam. Islam believes itself to be in possession of the holy truth. In the name of that truth, any act of violence is permitted, sanctioned and encouraged. It is perhaps only with that understanding that the "strategic decisions" of Saddam Hussein, even with his armed forces at the edge of destruction, can be explained.

■ For the first six centuries after the Moslems spilled forth from the Arabian peninsula, they conquered much of the then known world, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other. The Arab Moslems did in their ascendancy indeed give rise to a substantial civilization. But then, beginning with the expulsion from Spain, a long decline set in that lasted until the beginning of the 20th century. That decline was the more bitter, the more frustrating, because is was inflicted by the hated and despised "infidels". It was something that had to be remedied by whatever means. Injured pride had to be salved; the enemies who caused this humiliation and this painful injury had to be destroyed.

■ The 20th century brought national independence to the Arab states. Two other fundamental events occurred: 1) The discovery of the world's largest oil deposits under the Arabian peninsula, and 2) The creation, in 1948, of the state of Israel, which ever since its birth has been the concentrated focus of hatred and venom of all Moslem Arabs, a hatred that unites them, even surpasses their hatreds against each other, and that has launched them into five disastrous wars against Israel. Even the rape of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's Iraq was explained as being a step towards the "liberation of Palestine", a claim so bizarre, so patently absurd that it can only be comprehended and given credence by a mind obsessed with the ideology of Arab Islam.

■ The obsession of the Moslem Arabs with Israel is totally irrational. To have Israel, an advanced highly civilized Western outpost, as an independent country in the middle of the Arab-Moslem world is utterly intolerable to them. That is the reason that the 21 Arab states, among them the richest countries in the world, with a combined population of more than 200 million and with a land area greater than that of the U. S., have since the beginning of the century concentrated obsessive ferocity by military, economic, ideological, political, diplomatic, and any other means to destroy the tiny Jewish community of Palestine, and its successor, the Jewish state of Israel -- only 4 million people in a country just one-half the size of San Bernardino County in California.

The recent events in Iraq have sobered many who had believed the Israel-Palestinian conflict to be the cause for the unrest in the Middle East. The fact is that war is endemic in the Arab world and that the Moslem Arabs have been waging war against each other and against their non-Arab neighbors for centuries. But, as much as the Moslem Arabs hate each other, they are all united in their greater hatred against the "infidel Jews" and their tiny country, and they have built vast war machines for the ultimate "jihad" to chase the Jews into the sea. The insincere focus on the Palestinian plight is designed to divert attention from the many domestic problems and inter-Arab conflicts, and to direct the Moslem Arab frustration against Israel, the "infidel Western outsider". The suggestion that Israel divest itself from its historic heartland, the 2,362 sq. mi. "West Bank", would be a step toward its strategic suicide. The real cause of the never-ending turmoil in the Middle East is the unremitting desire of the Arab Moslem states to destroy Israel, their inability to come to terms with its very existence. That hatred and that intolerance are fueled by Arab-Moslem fanaticism and intransigence and unwillingness to accept diversity in the region. Only when that can be overcome can peace and tranquility finally come to the Middle East.

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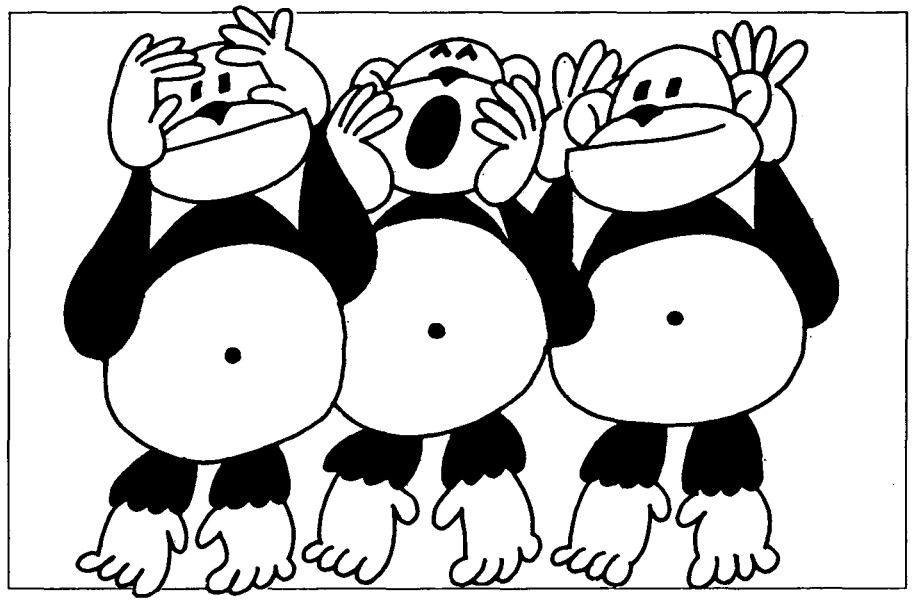
THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• After deconstructing Iraq in February, America in March turned to deconstructing its victory in the Gulf War. The results were predictable. "After the Euphoria, a Letdown," *Time* magazine announced, warning that Johnny will come marching home to "caution," "apprehension," "tension," "rude awakenings," "spending—and drinking—binges," "depression," and who knows what other manifestations of "postwar blues." Fortunately, the Navy has been flying teams of mental-health workers to returning ships and a homecoming-counseling program is available at the Marine Corps Air Station in Cherry Point, North Carolina. For the young commandos of two Lindenhurst, New York, elementary schools, who spent the war playing war games that included running through make-believe Iraqi minefields and punching at pictures of Saddam Hussein, it's probably too late. "My five-year-old daughter came home and said, 'We have to kill Saddam Hussein and his people,' " one parent lamented. "I have nurtured her about peace and harmony. What it took me five years to do, the school has undone in three weeks." The *Washington Post* took it from there: "U.S. Bombs Missed 70% Of Time," "After Victory, Saudis Are Uneasy," "Kuwait's Environmental, Economic Nightmare," "Kuwaiti Emir Returns To Host of Problems," "U.S. Seen Lacking Policy on Postwar Goals," "U.S. Relied on Foreign-Made Parts for Weapons." Ah, but there was a ray of hope bursting through the postwar gloom: "Baker Finds 'Window of Opportunity' for Peace," the *Post* declared, and true to form Secretary Baker became the only administration official to put in an appreciative word for Ronald Reagan. Speaking to the Gridiron Club, Baker recalled that before the war he had advised President Bush to "just do what Ronald Reagan would have done." "I don't have time for a nap," Mr. Bush allegedly replied.

• As many had predicted, the postwar Democratic party was wracked by factional fighting. Virginia Senator Chuck Robb was purged from the Senate Budget Committee owing to his pro-war stance, and Tennessee Senator Al Gore escaped a similar fate by leading the charge against pro-war Republicans and reminding the faithful that he remains a fanatical believer in global warming. Chatting with the editors of the *Honolulu Advertiser* in hush puppies and hushed tones ("because of the air conditioning; my vocal chords get affected once I do a lot of talking"), former Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis was as defiant as his tough guy image would allow: "Look, I remember a guy named Dukakis in May of 1987 saying we should impose sanctions and embargo [sic] on this lunatic Saddam." Saddam Hussein's mental incapacity proved a winning issue with Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as well, who found themselves kissing the bewitching hand of former ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie after she acknowledged that the administration "foolishly did not realize that [Saddam] was stupid." "I have the impression you handle yourself very well," said Illinois Senator Paul Simon, the dopiest of them all.

• The world of crime was no less affected by this outbreak of stupidity. In Dayton, Ohio, Miss Yvonne Adams, 20, in a job interview with the Ohio Highway Patrol, was asked about any past indiscretions that might inhibit her working as a state trooper. Yes, she replied, she and her husband had stolen a car from a Dayton dealership last June. When hubby came by in their late-model Honda after the interview, the couple was arrested and charged with auto theft. Police in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, apprehended two men driving a stolen 1971 Impala 30 miles an hour—in reverse, but with the flow of traffic—along Scenic Highway. Evidently, the suspects had already stripped the car of its forward gears. In Los Angeles, California, Stanford University president Donald Kennedy, mastermind of the Stanford procurement scandals, commiserated with alumni over the anger and embarrassment they must be feeling. But he has yet to apologize to the Hoover Institution, which perhaps should now move to sever its ties with the corrupt university. Further, President Kennedy has been in office for more than ten years and so far has not been subject to term limitation. Stanford trustees could take their cue from Zolfo Springs, Florida, a town of 1,650 which in the last year has gone through four mayors and four city clerks.



• In other education news, Mr. Spike Lee, the movie director and advertising genius, has accepted an offer from Harvard University to teach in its stuffy Afro-American Studies department. Maryland campuses are awaiting guest appearances from the state's new poet laureate, Mrs. Linda Pastan, well known in medical circles for her poem "At the Gynecologist's." On enrolling in Prof. Steven Shaviro's English 370 ("Fantasy") course at the University of Washington, students were told that "readings and emphasis [may] vary," and sure enough their second assignment required them to peruse a recent essay by J. G. Ballard, "Why I Want to F--- Ronald Reagan." Senator Joseph Biden might ponder whether the elderly former President now qualifies as a victim of hate crime. Miss Laurie Warnecke, an honor student vegetarian at Mahopac (N.Y.) High School, lost an exchange scholarship to Japan when the host country proved unwilling to place her in a meat-free home, officials said. "I couldn't sell out my values just for a trip to Japan," Miss Warnecke added. There's always Texas, where inmates at the Eden Detention Center in Eden took over the prison's food service building to demand larger servings of vegetables, especially fresh green lettuce. Honor was restored to the state with the opening of a new exhibit at the Star of the Republic Museum in Washington-on-the-Brazos, entitled "Chew, Chew, Chew and Spit, Spit, Spit: Tobacco in the Texas Republic" and featuring spittoons, roped tobacco, an authentic snuff box, and some peculiar fossil gobs.

• Spring arrived, and with it the safe landing of countless swallows at San Juan Capistrano, California. A dissident group, however, flew fifty miles up the coast to take up residence in the eaves of the abandoned library of Malibu's Pepperdine University, famous for its ocean view and unopened books. In Amherst, Massachusetts, dozens of salamanders used built-to-scale tunnels to crawl under a busy road to their historic breeding grounds, and in Clearwater, Florida, the spring-training comeback of underwear model and former pitcher Mr. Jim Palmer proved all too brief after he, ahem, pulled a thigh muscle. There may be work for him in Kyoto, Japan, where Wacoal Corporation, a leading lingerie manufacturer, hoped to sell 400,000 pairs of luminous panties in time for White Day on March 14, the day on which men reciprocate for chocolates received a month earlier on Valentine's Day. The product range this year included thermal panties, panties that glow in the dark, and panties that change pattern under the illumination of disco lights. Discreetly packaged, the items may be purchased from coin-operated pantie dispensers at a Wacoal store near you.

• In the realm of euphemism, headline-of-the-month goes to the *New York Times* for "Paper Says Jet Crashed After Pause by Pilot"—this above a story, first reported in Los Angeles, that the crash of an F-16 near Palmdale, California, last December came about when the plane went out of control "after the pilot paused to urinate into a plastic pouch during a routine training flight." Dr. Maurice Harold Friedman, 87, developer of the "rabbit test" for preg-

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nancy, died on March 8 in Sarasota, Florida. The test itself was confusing and has long since been replaced by simpler procedures. What's important here is that its name was not intended in any way to reflect on the fecundity of the woman being tested. On March 14, Mr. William Turnbull, 64, a founder of the North Point Press, died of stomach cancer at his home in Stinson Beach, California. His last moments, alas, were spoiled by the presence at his bedside of one Anne Lamott, the novelist. "It was a beautiful, dignified death," she gushed. "He was feeling jolly and playing a tape by Ella Fitzgerald. . . . Then he just stepped off into the deep end"—and presumably drowned. On March 6, the Rev. Hassan Sanei of Tehran, Iran, announced that his country was doubling the bounty on Mr. Salman Rushdie to $2 million. How much will we be paid if we deliver Miss Lamott instead?

—WP

CORRESPONDENCE

Ho, Hun

As to "Germany Neither East Nor West" (*TAS*, March 1991):

The self-appointed *praeceptor Germaniae* is a breed apart. The piece by Mr. George Szamuely is subtitled: "Reunification has left the Germans crabby, cowardly, and conveniently anti-Communist." The sheer fatuity of it makes any response virtually gratuitous, but still it might be worth suggesting that German craftsmanship, in its widest sense, is currently engaged in what must be one of the most grateful tasks in living memory. Reconstruction of the Ducal residence in Dresden is emblematic of such efforts, but these pervade all of what was once the "DDR" and provide enormous impetus for traditional German qualities—skill, competence, and dedication. Admittedly, Germany has its share of incompetent people—these seem to spend much of their time talking to reporters.

—Andrew Gray
Washington, D.C.

Don't Mess Around with Jim

I don't read *The American Spectator* often enough to know whether David Frum's breathless, sweaty, and profoundly dishonest screed about my *The Closest of Strangers* ("The Most Overrated Book of the Year," *TAS*, March 1991) is typical of what passes for good writing in your pages, but nothing he wrote encourages me to revisit you anytime soon. His piece is the perfect specimen of the tract-like writing that so often gave liberals like me an excuse to laugh off conservative discourse before the 1980s. Can your decision to publish it now be a symptom of your decline?

Probably not, for Frum has taken on more than he knows. He has to contend with Lawrence Mead's observation, in a penetrating—and critical—review in the journal *First Things*, that "[Sleeper] also writes well. Hardly a page of the book fails to strike off some memorable phrase. In addition to its shrewd analysis, *The Closest of Strangers* is a joy to read."

And with Glenn Loury's observation, in the *Washington Times*, that "this is an important and perceptive work. If we are lucky, it will spark a serious debate about race and politics. . . . If we are unlucky, we will get more of the same: name-calling, finger-pointing, and the effort by those on the left and the right who—to avoid the hard work that Mr. Sleeper has called us to—will affix political labels to his arguments, thereby making them easier to avoid."

I can cite other conservatives Frum overlooked—and I'll send their reviews to anyone writing me at 225 E. 14th St., Apt. 2B, New York, NY 10003—but then, as Frum put it at the intellectual high point of his diatribe, "You get the idea."

—Jim Sleeper
New York, New York

Devil or Angel?

Edward Norden's review of my new book, *The First Universal Nation* (*TAS*, March 1991) is quite interesting, if sometimes addled. Alas, his mini-review of my earlier (1987) book, *The Birth Dearth*—which appears within the very same piece—is wacky, or malign, or ignorant, or all of these.

A major argument of *The Birth Dearth*, stated early and often, is that Americans ought to take in more immigrants and have more children. More; not (as Norden characterizes my views) that America ought to take in just more white immigrants, not that just white women ought to have more babies; but just plain more; M-O-R-E, race-neutral.

I believed this because American population projections then showed us going from "low growth" to "no growth" to "negative growth." I believe that such a pattern would have harmed us, personally, economically, and geopolitically.

As described in *The First Universal Nation*, I did indeed support, and ultimately applaud, the new immigration law, although I wanted the numbers to be somewhat higher. But Norden's ignorance is monumental. Doesn't he know that about 70-80 percent of the immigrants coming in under the new immigration code will be of non-European ancestry? That almost all black and Hispanic congressmen supported the measure? That family-based immigration, mostly non-European, is increased, not decreased? That the biggest source of skills-preference immigration coming to America is from India?

Why would I support such legislation? Wouldn't that be a strange position to come from a man (me) who Norden indicates (mischievously? maliciously? certainly erroneously . . .) "wants to keep America basically white"! His characterization of my view is plain crapola.

As I say about a hundred times in both books, I think the recent Hispanic, Asian, Moslem, and black immigration into America has been salutary. That's what *The First Universal Nation* is all about; that America is working, working very well, with its new immigrant mix.

I also supported the new children's tax credit, which is pro-natalist legislation aimed at helping poor and lower-middle-class parents, who are disproportionately non-Anglo.

In *The Birth Dearth* I note that black middle-class fertility is very low, lower in fact than white middle-class fertility, and tragic.

The issues I raise in *The Birth Dearth* are issues of numbers, class, and geopolitical alignment, not race or ethnicity. (Japanese were part of my good guy coalition, whites from then-totalitarian Eastern Europe were not.)

Norden says I was "honest" and "brave" to write *The Birth Dearth*, which he describes as having a racial thesis. Thanks, but no thanks. It's not true, or close to it. Norden was neither brave nor honest in writing a review which does have a racial thesis.

—Ben J. Wattenberg
Washington, D.C.

Edward Norden replies:

Readers can decide from a chunk of *The Birth Dearth* (pp. 112–15) whether, as Wattenberg says in his letter, it is "race-neutral":

> I hesitate to bring it up. It is an extremely sensitive topic. It is an issue about which I believe I am on the side of the angels. Yet, if you are trying to deal with the problems associated with the Birth Dearth, the problem of race and ethnicity ought to be raised, no matter how sensitive the topic is.
>
> . . . Because they are more likely to be poor, blacks and Hispanics have substantially higher fertility rates than whites. Further, recent immigrants have higher fertility rates than other Americans, at least for their first generation in residence.
>
> Moreover, the great majority of immigrants these days come from Hispanic nations, Asian nations, Moslem nations, and black African nations. Less than 20 percent of legal immigrants to America today are of white European "stock," to use Census parlance. The rate is even less than that if illegal immigrants are counted in. . . .
>
> Today, 80 percent of the current total U.S. population is of white European stock. At roughly current rates of fertility and immigration (similar to those used in this volume), demographers Leon Bouvier and Robert Gardiner have projected that by the year 2080 . . . the white European share of the U.S. population will be down . . . to 60 percent, and still shrinking. . . .
>
> What happens in [such] an America? . . . Unpleasant as the thought may be, I think it will yield some unnecessary social turbulence. And it won't be the fault of the immigrants, Hispanics, blacks, or Asian or Moslem Americans.
>
> I do not believe that America is essentially a racist or bigoted country. . . . Indeed, enormous strides toward amity among the races, religions, and ethnic groups have been achieved in recent decades. But what's coming down the road at us demographically is asking for some extra trouble, and it is self-inflicted.
>
> . . . It is true that America has absorbed tens of millions of immigrants before. There was turmoil then, even though the existing population and the new immigrants could each be described as "white European," despite sometimes major cultural and religious differences. This time the cultural, linguistic and racial differences seem even greater to many Americans. To that must be added the long range question, troubling to many, of whether America will remain a nation that can continue to be characterized as one that is predominately of white European extraction. . . .
>
> The potential resentment yielded by such changes in the demographic mix can yield ugly turbulence. To those who feel that America must absolutely remain a nation with a clear majority of citizens with a white European heritage (I don't), it should be pointed out to them that the problem they see is essentially one brought upon [sic] by their own actions. The root cause of the changing demographic balance in America . . . is the very low fertility of the middle class Americans who are already here.

So I'll stick to my guns. The "net effect" of squelching illegal immigration while increasing quotas for Europeans would, as I wrote, be "more new Americans from Europe, fewer from elsewhere." This is what Wattenberg wants, not because he's a racist, but because he thinks that many of his countrymen are. Hence, for the sake of domestic tranquility, the influx of Third Worlders should be controlled, and native middle-class women, mostly white, should have more babies.

(continued on page 54)

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EDITORIAL

PC PEOPLE

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Our universities are in crisis. Something must be done! And at *The American Spectator* we have decided that something will be done.

This is not to say that all provinces of the great universities are in crisis. Departments of the sciences still function reasonably well, and knowledge in many scientific fields proliferates annually at an amazing pace. Engineering and medicine flourish. Business schools turn out aspiring Rockefellers and Milkens.

Most optimistically, the great purpose of American higher education has not been obnubilated. On autumnal Saturdays in Nebraska and Michigan, in Ohio and Oklahoma, and in many fine Southern states, all work ceases. The tractors stand idle in the fields. In lesser fields the oxen interrupt their harvest tramp. All hands head for the house and all ears turn to the wireless, as the flower of the state's manhood strap on armor and gulp down one last restorative of steroids for the afternoon's carnage on the gridiron.

College athletics have never been more robust. In a dozen sports our universities have enrolled some of the finest professional athletes money can buy. Many have been taught to read. The scientifically inclined are often perfectly capable of matching skills with those of their profs at Nintendo, and even Sega. Many universities have adopted athletic programs for coeds that are as lucrative as the programs that fire the idealism of male athletes. What is more, most of the great universities now allow students to participate in sport despite academic records that hitherto would have prohibited such healthful play. Even a student's criminal record is unlikely to preclude participation in a university athletic program nowadays, so long as the student is not actually still in jail or on death row. I am told that, even in the Ivy League, a prison term of less than five years has no effect on athletic eligibility, so long as the incarcerated athlete remains fit and reasonably "drug-free."

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. is editor-in-chief of The American Spectator.

No, at the heart of the university all is well. But in the university's quieter locales, where etiquette matters, where folkways and mores are carefully prescribed by traditions that trace back to the monasticism of the Middle Ages, a blue-nosed orthodoxy called PC, which in the original Chinese characters appears roughly like this

正确路线

is now conjured up when the authorities in Peking sense that college students are getting out of line.

Noting the irony that PC is proliferating in America even as tolerance and free inquiry proliferate in Soviet universities, Charles Bremner of the *Times* of London defines PC as "a cluster of broadly left-wing attitudes designed to foster tolerance towards race, gender and class but which seem, in Orwellian fashion, to do the opposite." And *Newsweek* identifies PC as "a set of beliefs and expressions which students from places as diverse as Sarah Lawrence and San Francisco State recognize instantly as . . . politically correct," an

agenda . . . broadly shared by most organizations of minority students, feminists and gays. It is also the program of a generation of campus radicals who grew up in the 1960s and are now achieving positions of academic influence. If they no longer talk of taking to the streets, it is because they now are gaining access to the conventional weapons of campus politics: social pressure, academic perks . . . outright coercion.

Bremner wonders: "How did the PC culture become so powerful in a country dominated by conservative politics?" The answer is that it withdrew to those areas of American life where politics is non-democratic and played by manipulating liberal ideals. Now, however, American liberals are beginning to sense that PC culture is profoundly anti-liberal. The real question is: Will anyone be able to rescue the universities from PC's anti-intellectual radicals of the 1960s?

Incidentally, this is a generation of radicals who, despite two decades of braggadocio have made no greater contribution to Western intellect than have the intellectual elites of Bulgaria (and I mean no disrespect to Bulgaria's eggheads; they did labor under certain impediments). The American radicals were oppressed only by their megalomania and swinishness. Their illuminati have created not one book admired anywhere by anyone but them. Aside from a little rock music and a few treatises on the public benefits of dope and zoo sex, the 1960s radicals have created nothing of lasting intellectual interest. They have given us no generation of writers, no Angry Young Men, no Bloomsbury, not even a Beat Generation. As a class, they are pampered provincials from the 'burbs, and now they are returning American universities to the status of second-rate cow colleges whose attainments in the humanities and in various of the social sciences are the laughingstock of the world. There is more sophistication at the gaming tables of Monte Carlo than in the faculty club of Stanford University—and infinitely more charm. American students seeking a sound grounding in their civilization would be better advised to head out for the University of Tokyo, where the profs speak better English and probably are even superior to the average American prof in Nintendo.

PC is supposed to encourage "diversity," but one finds more diversity at the University of Moscow than on the average American campus. It is supposed to encourage toleration of minorities and something envisaged as "multiculturalism," but it is spectacularly intolerant and fundamentally ignorant of all cultures. It is supposed to create a sense of intellectual community, but in its brutal contentiousness—pitting sex against sex, ethnic group against ethnic group, class against class—it could not possibly create community. In its faddishness, it is inimical to intellect.

More than 130 universities have issued codes barring free discussion of dozens of topics, most of them quite idiotic, although many universities have made them burning issues on campus. University thought patrols (at Tulane, the thought patroller is called an "enrichment-liaison person," with one posted in each department) harass profs and students with their codes, many of which are being adjudged unconstitutional in the courts. At Smith College the code delineates ten kinds of oppression to be avoided, among them ageism ("oppression of the young and old by young adults and the middle-aged") and heterosexism ("oppression of those of sexual orientations other than heterosexual . . . this can take place by not acknowledging their existence"). My favorite is lookism ("construction of a standard for beauty/attractiveness").

At the University of Michigan, the code prohibits "any behavior, verbal or physical, that stigmatizes or victimizes an individual on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation,

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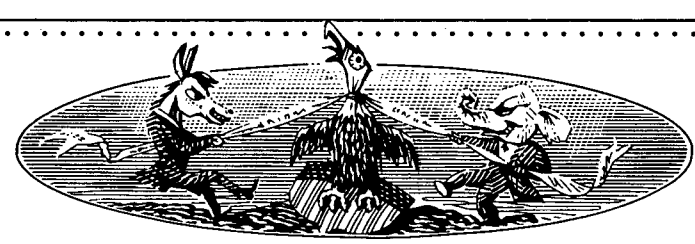
creed, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, handicap or Vietnam-era veteran status." The University of Connecticut issued a proclamation banning "inappropriately directed laughter." Reports of students being singled out for exercising free speech now number in the hundreds. Some of these reports indeed disclose insensitivity by students, but the 1960s radicals who spit on Vietnam veterans and burned their flag are unlikely champions of sensitivity.

PC constitutes a vast infringement on the human rights of students. It also constitutes a fraud. According to its idiotic principles, students are to be denied much of the highest thought of Western civilization on the grounds that much of that thought has issued from Dead White European Males. In place of the works of such men as Socrates, Milton, and Dante, students are forced to read ephemeral trash written (or perhaps scratched on bark) by Third World farceurs. Lecturers ridicule not just the United States but also the civilization that launched it, and they do so by taking unfair advantage of standards of freedom and individualism that, as a matter of fact, are unique to the West. It is Western civilization that has tolerated diversity, exalted freedom, and remained sufficiently open to other cultures to be able to revitalize its own art.

The present low estate of academia is not particularly surprising. It was back in the early 1960s, in a book that makes ironic reading today, *Anti-Intellectualism in America*, that the historian Richard Hofstadter observed that "ours is the only educational system in the world vital segments of which have fallen into the hands of people who joyfully and militantly proclaim their hostility to intellect." The advocates of PC are indeed hostile to intellect, but they are also hostile to human rights. That is why the editors of this magazine, along with various other friends of freedom across the Republic, are establishing a human rights monitoring network, Amnesty in Academia, to protest human-rights violations committed against students by "enrichment-liaison persons." We shall establish an 800 number that students can call to notify Amnesty's caseworkers of the imminent arrest of a Shakespearean scholar or the brutal interrogation of a student caught whistling the National Anthem on campus (see box, p. 8). We shall send such trained human rights negotiators as P. J. O'Rourke to campus despotisms where students are being oppressed and, at places like Stanford University, quite possibly tortured. We shall publish a yearly review of human rights violations on campus and a list of the worst tyrannies in academia. Legal counsel will be available where the courts still function. And this fall we shall publish a special back-to-school issue, detailing the services of Amnesty in Academia, advising students on how to survive in societies hostile to human liberty and to learning.

The anti-intellectualism of the American academy is an old story, but human rights violations committed in the name of PC are relatively new. Little can be done about mediocre and indolent teachers, but perhaps something can be done to protect liberty, particularly now that liberals seem to be catching on that we all have a stake in campuses graced by intellectual diversity, academic freedom, and the Bill of Rights—and, of course, strong athletic programs. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



TULANE AND THE BIG GOVERNMENT CAMPUS

by Tom Bethell

New Orleans

Like other professors who have resisted the importation of "politically correct" thought into the university, Tulane's Paul Lewis has good liberal credentials. He received his doctorate from the University of North Carolina in 1965, and in a book entitled *North Carolina and the Negro* is depicted in Chapel Hill in 1963, singing "We Shall Overcome" with a group of civil-rights activists. Five years later he voted for Eugene McCarthy for President. Today he is chairman of the political science department at Tulane University, the author of a recently published book, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*, and the most visible opponent of a "politically correct" assault on Tulane.

Last year, after the university administration circulated a draft document entitled "Initiatives for the Race and Gender Enrichment of Tulane," Bill Gwyn of the political science department drew Lewis's attention to the document, calling it "the most dangerous proposal I've seen in 25 years." The "initiative" opened with the casual assertion that "racism and sexism are pervasive in America, and are fundamentally present in all American institutions," by implication including Tulane. This claim was neither documented nor could it be contradicted, Gwyn pointed out, since the alleged sentiments of racism and sexism were said to be held "unconsciously."

Lewis's first inclination was not to get involved. He had always considered campus politics a great time-waster. Finally, he responded by drafting a resolution calling the document an attack on academic freedom and a "direct insult to the integrity of this faculty," which was encouraged to "reject all procedures proposed" by the initiative.

The Tulane document proposed the following: Every department would be required to hire qualified "people of color" and/or women until the university's affirmative action goal was met. The provost would "aggressively use his authority" to "overrule the hiring recommendation of a department" if incorrect faculty members were hired. "People of color" and women were to be lured with reduced teaching loads, higher salaries, and special stipends. Departments would be pressured to "integrate materials on women and people of color in their course curriculum." Faculty members would be expected to attend "racism and sexism awareness" seminars to "sensitize" them (i.e., re-educate them). In a further echo of totalitarianism, faculty and students would also be encouraged to report on each other. And every department would have its own KGB officer, called an "enrichment liaison person," who would inform the administration about progress in meeting "enrichment goals."

Lewis wrote a letter to the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, pointing out all these things. It was published prominently on the editorial page, and made an impact. As a well-known New Orleans lawyer pointed out, Tulane has a local board of administrators. They can therefore find out what's going on at the university by reading the local newspaper. So one whistle-blower can cause the administration a big headache. At universities with national boards, however—Stanford, Harvard, and Duke are examples—the president has greater power, because the board will tend to know only what he tells them. In any event, the Tulane administration was immediately thrown on the defensive by Lewis's letter. Eamon Kelly, the president of Tulane, replied with a letter of his own, rather lamely pointing out that these were mere proposals, not yet in final form. If they had been quashed, the university itself "would have been gravely guilty of suppressing intellectual freedom."

The *Wall Street Journal* then mentioned the Tulane developments in one of its editorials on the declining academy, prompting another reply from Eamon Kelly. In mid-March there was a debate at Tulane's law school, with Lewis and Eric Mack, a libertarian member of the philosophy department, arguing against the proposed initiative. On the other side were Ronald Mason, general counsel and senior vice president of the university, and a law school professor. It was a low-key, decorous event, given the divisiveness of the topic. Everyone seemed to be conscious of the news media's potential interest in the story. By this time, the "MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour" and *Time* magazine had also contacted Paul Lewis.

Professor Mack had earlier circulated a memo among his colleagues, denouncing the "enrichment" document as itself "profoundly racist and sexist," for the following reason: "It fully embraces one of the key anti-liberal principles found at the core of all racist movements. This is the thesis that how

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people think, feel, and act is determined by their racial/biological category. This thesis appears within the document in the claim that at present the university represents only a narrow and parochial perspective on the world because its membership is drawn largely from 'one small sector of our society,' viz the 'Caucasian' and the 'male.' "

If it's true, Mack continued, that people's way of thinking is determined by their biological category, then "the pursuit of rational and humane intergroup communication is absurd." We're all locked into our biological boxes (except for the "miraculously enlightened few" who propose to set us straight), making respectful discourse between the separate groups impossible. This in turn leaves room "only for coercion and indoctrination," which the document duly supports, "with great internal consistency."

I lived in New Orleans for years and it was a pleasure to be back recently, in that blessed interlude—call it "Lent" —between the crowds of Mardi Gras and the heat of summer. Tulane I knew quite well, mostly as a visitor and user of its library. It was the best university in the New Orleans area, no doubt in the state, and of course reliably liberal and very much representative of the views and opinions of the American academy in general. Strange now to think of it as harboring whole departments of racists and sexists, I thought, as though perhaps the Plaquemines Parish followers of Leander Perez (excommunicated by the Archbishop in the 1960s for his segregationist views) had somehow managed to gain appointment and tenure at the university. How very implausible the whole thing seemed!

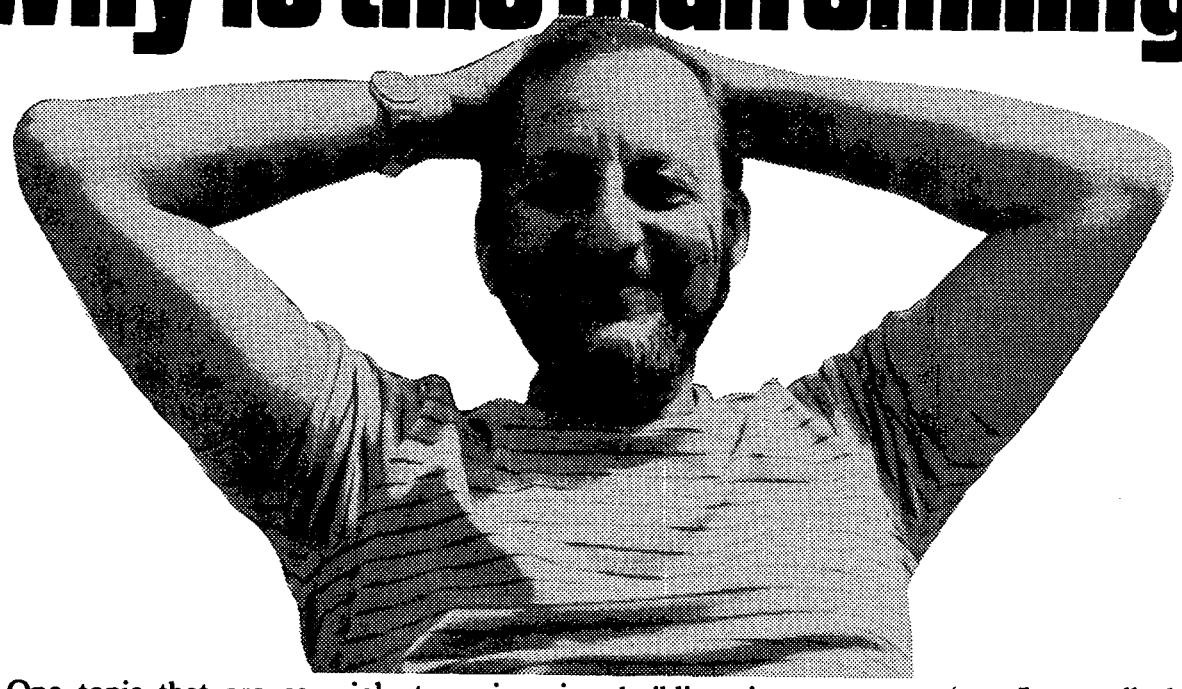
Paul Lewis turned out to be a well-organized, intelligent person who had been keeping careful files and obviously had spent a good deal of time in recent months thinking about the politicization of the academy and the rise of a new form of McCarthyism. He told me that he had received quite a bit of support for the stand he has taken—some of it from people he had never heard of before, some of it anonymous. Evidently there are people on campus who didn't like what was going on but are afraid to say so publicly. As a result of the publicity, Lewis thought, supporters of the initiative were "hunkering down in their foxholes for a while" but wouldn't give up, because they were "true believers."

A revised version of the proposal will be circulated sometime in April. The chairman of the university's affirmative action committee said at the law school debate that the problems identified by Lewis would be addressed. But senior vice president Ron Mason, who is black, said in the debate that the revised proposal will be "tougher than ever."

Paul Lewis pointed out that three of the key figures in the administration pushing for the initiative—Eamon Kelly, Ron Mason, and Paul Firstenberg, chancellor for Resource Planning and Development—were alumni of the Ford Foundation. Kelly worked there for ten years before coming to Tulane. He and Firstenberg "go back a long way together," Lewis said. Furthermore, on the day before the initiative was promulgated, the Ford Foundation awarded a grant of $100,000 to Tulane—to be spent on "race and gender understanding." Tulane was in fact one of nineteen universities to be so favored by the foundation, which apparently is giving away millions in support of this cause.

Lewis had some interesting things to say about the dilemma of the university president in general. Few stay for much more than a decade at whatever institution they preside over, and in that time they naturally want to make an impact. But it isn't easy to do so. Changing the academic level of the university is not something that can be easily achieved in so short a time—if it can be done at all. On the other hand, bureaucratic empire-building does have its possibilities. If implemented, the Tu-

why is this man smiling



One topic that arouses violent passions in just about everyone is Rent Control. Socialists, liberals and tenant activists love it. Landlords, economists, and free-market advocates hate it. But until this man came along, no one ever dared to poke fun at it.

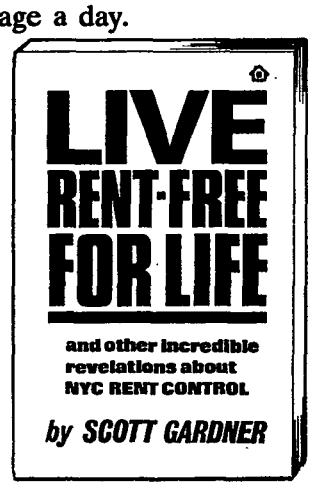
Inspired by his ten year traumatic experience as owner of a small Manhattan townhouse, Scott Gardner discovers a vast gold mine of comedy that has never before been tapped. His new book, *"Live Rent-Free For Life,"* reveals for the first time the wild and wacky world of rent control in all its bizarre absurdities.

But *"Live Rent-Free"* is more than just a funny book about rent control. Here is a classic case study of what happens when vote-hungry politicians pander to tenants' greed and confiscate other people's property using discredited socialist methods. The resulting pandemonium is revealed with such incisive wit and devastating satire, you wonder why America has put up with this law for so long.

Chuckle over a chaotic bureaucracy so bogged down in red tape and hatred of private property, that it allows wealthy New York tenants to legally live rent-free for life. Enjoy Gardner's sure-fire method of turning $100,000 into $1.25 by investing in rent controlled buildings in your spare time. Learn all about his new bill that will permanently cure poverty, homelessness, and unemployment forever by reallocating this nation's "scarce resources." And revel over his hilarious parody of Hitler's "final solution" to the city's age-old "landlord problem," among many other rib-tickling and laugh-provoking revelations.

This book is guaranteed to be harmless to conservatives. But bleeding-heart liberals have been known to go into apoplectic fits after the first three chapters. Middle-of-the-roaders should read just one page a day.

Oh yes, Gardner is smiling because with his book selling so well, he is probably the only landlord in the world to make money out of rent control. If your bookstore is afraid to stock *"Live Rent-Free For Life,"* please order direct. Send $11.95 (shipping included) to: Scott Gardner, Box 248A, 1173A 2nd Avenue NY 10021. Or call toll-free: **1-800-388-7738**



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lane initiative will shift a lot of power from the faculty to the university administration, considering the "enrichment liaison" types it would have to hire.

In the last twenty years, Lewis pointed out, the number of full-time students at Tulane has increased by 72 percent, while the number of administrators has increased by 300 percent (and the number of faculty by 25 percent). So one does begin to form the impression of an administrative class of Higher Educators, well armored with advanced degrees but "not true academicians," as Lewis remarked, floating about from one foundation to another —Ford to Carnegie to Rockefeller— with intermediate administrative stops at educational establishments, spending gilt-edged trust funds on guilt-edged causes; seeking, as the Tulane proposal (in a nice outburst of utopian candor) says, "to change over time the nature of our University, and bring it to the next level of social and human progress."

In a recent issue of *Academic Questions*, a publication of the National Association of Scholars ("the cutting edge of faculty opposition to the excesses of multiculturalism," according to *Time*), Thomas Short of Kenyon College makes much the same point. Entitled "Making the Campus Safe for Bureaucracy," his article describes a 1990 Carnegie Foundation report (*Campus Life: In Search of Community*) that is replete with woolly-headed nonsense about caring and celebrative communities, multi-cultural pluralism, and cross-cultural diversity. Paul Lewis mentioned that the "advocacy of interdisciplinary programs" is one of the more effective tools used by administrators who in general want to "pulverize faculty resistance to centralization."

John Shelton Reed, a professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina, mentioned to me the other day that the problem in the universities may not be as widespread as some fear. (Reed has spent this academic year at Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, and I find that I turn first to his very readable column, "From the Lower Right," in the monthly journal *Chronicles*. Reed fans should know that many of his columns have been reprinted in *Whistling Dixie*, published by the University of Missouri Press, with a foreword by Eugene Genovese.)

As Reed pointed out, the problem at Duke is worse than at Chapel Hill. In the Bay Area there's a close analogy. I'm told that the University of California at Berkeley is far from being a radical hotbed these days. It was, of course, at the elite private institution across the Bay that students were first heard shouting "Hey hey, ho ho, Western culture's got to go!" But even at Stanford, I gather, students of late have been tactfully resisting the feminist mind patrol and the multicultural brainwashing.

"And I don't have an answer to that," Paul Lewis said, when I mentioned this apparently greater susceptibility of private institutions to politicization and ideological takeover. One would think that the dependence of such private institutions as Duke and Stanford on the generosity of their alumni would make them less political and more accountable than they seem to have been. Then again, the alumni of such institutions notoriously don't have much idea what is going on beyond the performance of the football and basketball teams. Now, with all the publicity, perhaps they are beginning to find out.

In fact, the siege of political correctness could well have salutary effects. Given that the academy has long been the main citadel of liberalism, what we have been seeing in recent years can be considered an oblique attack on liberalism itself from an unexpected direction. The effect might be to encourage liberals to ask themselves what, if anything, they do believe in, beyond "freedom of expression." □

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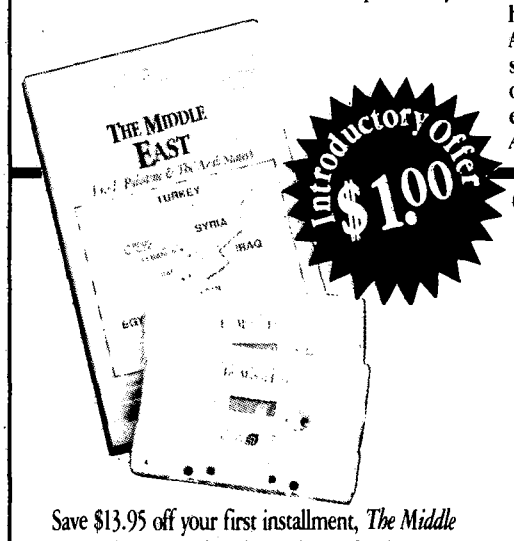

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David Frum

CAMPUS COUNTERREVOLUTION

New appointments at Harvard Law School and Yale College indicate that the left's assault on the universities may be petering out.

All along the front, the artillery has opened fire at the tempting target of Political Correctness. The first salvo was fired by the *New York Review of Books* last May, when Helen Vendler—perhaps America's most influential poetry critic—condemned half a dozen major feminist literary critics and anthologists for their "ideological approval of third-rate work." Then in October, the big guns of the *New York Times* Arts & Leisure pages began to boom, as culture reporter Richard Bernstein complained of "the rising hegemony of the politically correct." In December, a *Newsweek* cover story blasted the "thought police" of the campus left, and asked whether its dogmatism constituted a "new McCarthyism" (while reserving kind words for the dogmas themselves). The *New York Review of Books* resumed its cannonade that same month with a huge attack on the campus left by the noted Berkeley philosopher John Searle for the "immoral" practice of "using the classroom to impose a specific ideology on students," and for "politicizing the whole curriculum." In January, *New York* magazine, which normally finds it hard to get angry about anything more topical than the insufficient fluffiness of a scallop mousse, let loose its howitzers by putting the satiric question "Are You Politically Correct?" on its cover, and pictures of Maoist Red Guards and book-burning Hitler Youth on the inside. In February, the *New Republic* devoted an entire issue to shelling left-wing illiberalism on campus. And last month, the *Atlantic* joined the barrage with a long excerpt from ex-*Dartmouth Review* editor Dinesh D'Souza's new book *Illiberal Education* (see review, p. 53), while *New York* magazine lionized Camille Paglia, a weird but aggressively Incorrect feminist.

David Frum is an assistant features editor at the Wall Street Journal.

You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows. In a funny description of last December's Modern Language Association meeting in Chicago, *New Criterion* managing editor Roger Kimball observed that each politically correct talk began with a hasty disavowal of political correctness. The MLA lecturers are slowpokes: more than a year ago, the ultra-chic Edward Said, the PLO apologist who holds a day job teaching literary theory at Columbia, made a point of criticizing the "badgering, hectoring, authoritative tone" of much of contemporary cultural studies. Henry Louis Gates, the new chairman of the Afro-American Studies department at Harvard and probably the wiliest academic politician in the country, delivered an address to the American Studies Association in November distancing himself from the extremes of both left and right, and asking that multiculturalism be recognized not as a repudiation of academic traditions, but as a manifestation of "liberal pluralism." Even Stanley Fish, the Duke University English department chairman who became notorious for urging that members of the local chapter of the National Association of Scholars (chaired by that old New Deal liberal James David Barber!) be excluded from committees charged with tenure or curriculum decisions, is quietly letting it be known that he is really a very conservative fellow.

The media challenge and the academic response make it look as if, under tremendous criticism from the press, the academic left is beginning to retreat. If so, this would be enormously encouraging news—it would imply, for one thing, that the university has not become so hermetically sealed an institution that it is beyond saving by the larger society

But the truth may well be more encouraging than that. For this winter's journalistic onslaught against the academic left is only one in a series of defeats that holds out the hope that the university may in the end even be capable of saving itself.

Perhaps the worst of these defeats occurred at the Harvard Law School. Five years ago, Harvard Law seemed on the verge of becoming the academic left's biggest conquest. The essential position of the law school subdivision of the academic left, which calls itself "Critical Legal Studies," is that the law is "indeterminate": no judicial result is more legally correct than any other, because a clever judge can invent an equally convincing justification for virtually any result he cares to reach. Happily, precisely because the law is indeterminate, the same legal rules and institutions that now protect capitalist society can be used to destroy it.

In the early 1980s, the arrival at Harvard of a cadre of charismatic CLS scholars, the most brilliant of them a bearded, blue-jeaned relic of the sixties named Duncan Kennedy, dazzled a faculty bored with plain vanilla Brennan-style liberalism and demoralized by the sudden ascendancy of Reagan Republicanism in Washington, and delighted students with an unstuffy style of teaching and unprecedentedly easy grading. Those who were not dazzled or delighted were easily ignored or intimidated. The faculty roster quickly filled with CLS professors.

But each lot of new CLS hires was less impressive—and more clearly chosen on political grounds—than the last. And, with each lot, CLS professors and their allies came closer to numbering 33 percent of the tenured faculty, the proportion needed to veto future tenure offers. By 1986, the hard and soft left appeared to be within a vote or two of a

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reasonably reliable 33-percent bloc, and thus of a decisive voice in the governance of the school. At that point, the faculty was called on to vote on a tenure offer to Clare Dalton, a young female professor associated with CLS.

Dalton was a popular teacher and a sympathetic, cheerful personality in a school full of cranky egotists. She was particularly popular with female law students, many of whom turned to her for personal and professional advice and support. What she was not was a scholar of substance. If she'd been a man or a conservative woman she would have been unceremoniously dinged. (Harvard had refused to offer tenure to a capable, but non-left, woman scholar just three years before.)

Dalton's case provoked two years of bitter faculty wrangling, which turned into a struggle over control of the school, with its meek dean, James Vorenberg, helplessly looking on. By the end of the affair it was clear that a victory for her would neatly box and gift-wrap the premier law school in America, and present it to CLS. And then an amazing thing happened. For only the second time in his twenty years in office, Harvard President Derek Bok intervened in a law school tenure decision. He convened a panel, considered the record from scratch, and . . . turned Dalton down.

Scandalized, law school students mounted protests, petitions, and sit-ins. Leftists on the faculty squawked and hollered at this intrusion into its prerogatives. Dalton brought a sex discrimination suit, which has since petered out. Vorenberg, tired of it all, submitted his resignation. Bok happily accepted it, and picked as Vorenberg's successor Robert Clark—a young (45) corporation law professor, a faculty adviser to the Federalist Society, and one of Harvard Law's three confessed Republicans. It was all rather as if the 101st Airborne had parachuted into Prague in February 1948.

There are limits, of course, to what any one dean can do. The left still exercises huge power at Harvard Law. Just last fall, a popular first-year property-law professor found his classes boycotted and picketed after he confessed in class that he didn't know enough about the law of antebellum slavery to spend more than a single class on the topic. Even now, one of the school's weirder characters, Professor Derrick Bell, has taken a year's leave of absence to protest the absence of black women from the school's tenured faculty. (The *New York Times* and other newspapers have reported that Bell is self-sacrificingly forfeiting his salary; in fact, it is being quietly made up by Bill Cosby.) There have been marches and demonstrations, and a group of students has brought an antidiscrimination lawsuit against Harvard, demanding the appointment of a black woman professor. The suit has been joined by national civil rights organizations, and is surreptitiously being advised by members of the faculty, including Bell himself.

Yet the left at Harvard Law is unmistakably deflated. In his fall 1989 address to the incoming class, Dean Clark broke with the rigid custom that requires law school deans to urge their students to go to work for Ralph Nader after graduation, and said instead, "No part of the profession has a monopoly on 'doing good.' Helping people to solve their problems—to cope with government agencies and neighbors and spouses—is essential work of lawyers. So is helping the wheels of commerce turn and helping business produce the goods and services needed by society. Do not let anyone convince you that you are 'selling out' in whatever career you choose."

When Duncan Kennedy and the CLS professors were pressing for tenure for Dalton, they claimed that CLS was the most important movement in contemporary law, and few of their colleagues disagreed—at any rate, out loud. Just three years later, Bell and the left have been reduced to begging for a quota.

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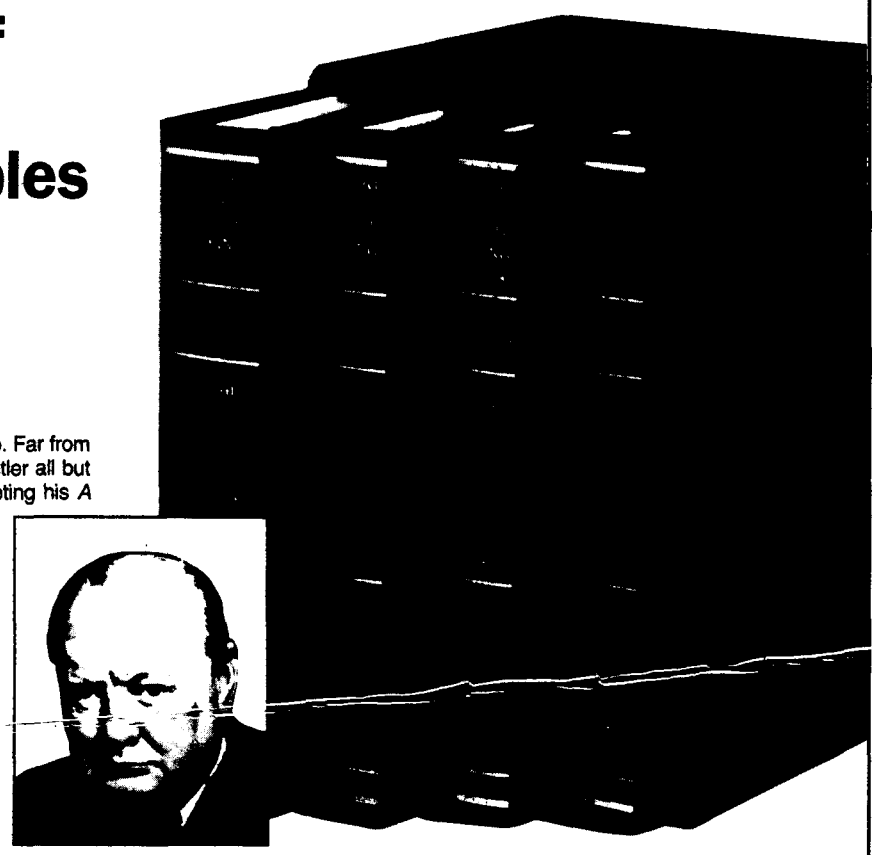

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A year after Harvard's Bok installed Clark at the law school, Yale President Benno Schmidt emulated him by selecting Donald Kagan, an aggressively conservative classics professor, as dean of Yale College. Kagan, a contributor to *Commentary* and the *Wall Street Journal*, maintains that the appointment "astonished" him, but Schmidt's motives are intelligible enough. Schmidt, a former constitutional law professor, is a stickler for campus free speech. One of his first acts on becoming president in 1986 was to overturn the punishment of a sophomore who had been charged with sexual harassment and sentenced to *two years* probation for putting up posters satirizing Yale's annual "Gay and Lesbian Awareness Days." The punishment, grave enough to have destroyed the student's hopes of attending law school, violated Yale's own detailed rules on freedom of undergraduate speech.

Under pressure from an increasingly radicalized administrative apparatus, Schmidt needed a dean capable of protecting academic free speech. He must have realized that, however paid up their memberships in the ACLU may have been, his liberal colleagues were not up to the job. Kagan, who teaches the history of the Peloponnesian War in a Brooklyn accent and from under a Korean War–style crewcut, was his man.

Schmidt and Kagan have made it clear that the left will not be permitted to shut up its opponents—or close down their classes. In a memo released last January, Schmidt warned, "I believe that crisis is not an occasion to divert this institution from its important mission of teaching and research." And in an address last September, Kagan insisted that the study of Western civilization and its achievements will remain at the core of Yale's humanities programs, not just because America "developed within the context of Western civilization," but because the roots of the modern world's technology and freedom "are to be found uniquely in the experiences and ideas of the West." He added, "Most of the sins and errors of Western civilization are those of the human race. Its special achievements and values, however, are gifts to all humanity . . . "

It takes about twenty years for a bright undergraduate to become a full professor. What today's professors think is what bright undergraduates thought twenty years ago and more. It should have been predictable in 1968 that the years from 1985 to 2000 would be among the most troubled in the history of the American university—and it is equally predictable today, when more than 60 percent of the undergraduates at both Harvard and Yale (according to polls by the student newspapers) supported the Gulf War, that the university will begin to settle down over the course of the coming decade. The opinions of lawyers, the great English jurist A. V. Dicey observed a century ago, are the public opinion of a generation ago; the opinions of judges, of the generation before that. Universities are almost as backward-looking—and the seeds of hope accordingly take a long time to germinate.

No, the academic left is not beaten, nor does it show any signs of losing soon. Yes, it still is fantastically powerful, even at those universities where it has suffered defeats, and it uses its power to do outrageous things. And, just possibly, it may be able to circumvent the demographic trends, excluding today's young non-leftist scholars from promotion, and, like the mainline Protestant denominations, isolating itself from the conservatism of the young in order to enjoy its plush endowments in splendid irrelevance. But there is reason to hope that a better result is on its way, evidence that accumulates with every passing year and with every fresh wrinkle on the foreheads of the generation of '68. □

KIDS TODAY

by Patrick Quinn

Lawrence, Kansas

You see a lot of tie-dyed T-shirts on college campuses these days. Psychedelia is hip again, lava lamps are back, and kids not old enough to remember the Sex Pistols are flocking to Oliver Stone's movie about the Doors. Today's college culture claims direct descent from that of the sixties and seventies, so you have to wonder: If pop history is so important to modern students, how come they don't know anything about it?

G. Gordon Liddy and Timothy Leary are hardly the stuff of serious textbooks, but they personify the cartoon version of history that is currently the received wisdom on most campuses. Both have been fixtures on the lecture circuit for years, and periodically the two join forces in what's billed as (brace yourself) The Great Debate—"an exploration of the dichotomies between the bureaucracy of higher education and the sanctity of the individual and his beliefs, and between the responsibility of the individual to himself and the responsibility of the individual to his society and his government." Take that, Mortimer Adler.

Liddy and Leary recently presented their dog-and-pony show in Hoch Auditorium at the University of Kansas; more than 1,400 people, most of them students, paid money to hear two ex-convicts lecture on the foundations of moral society. But the central irony of the Great Debate runs even deeper than that: most of the kids barely know who these guys are.

Patrick Quinn is a writer living in Lawrence, Kansas.

That's not to say that the formerly notorious principals have slipped into obscurity. A curious kind of non-specific name recognition now substitutes for fame in America, and nowhere is that better illustrated than on a college campus. You don't have to be famous *for* anything to draw a college crowd anymore—simply being famous is enough. To judge from the comments in the lobby before the show, most of the attendees knew that Leary had done a lot of acid and that Liddy had

been involved in "that Watergate-Nixon stuff." But none had any idea why the two could be expected to disagree.

The moderator was a fortyish assistant professor of religious studies who clearly cut his political teeth around 1970. He was reverent while introducing Leary, reading from *The Politics of Ecstasy* and omitting any mention of the doctor's numerous career setbacks. Leary received a tremendous ovation as he took the stage. Liddy rated no more than a brief recap of his criminal career and a stern glare, and the professor's dismay was visible when the students cheered as loudly for the Dark Prince of Watergate as they had for the Pied Piper of LSD.

But, of course, the kids weren't cheering the Dark Prince of Watergate, they were cheering a pop celebrity who had played a bad guy on "Miami Vice." This generation of students derives its knowledge of the sixties and seventies from "Doonesbury" and "thirtysomething," and that's not a curriculum that admits a lot of detail. They know no more about Watergate than they do about Teapot Dome, and "Tune in, turn on, drop out" rings about as many bells as "Fifty-four-forty or fight." The audience clapped a lot that night, but they were responding to performance, not politics.

"Ever since 1965, I have passionately believed that the individual can learn how to become divine," Leary gurgled, and the kids clapped. "When you decide that you must break the law for the greater good, then you break the law, accept the consequences and don't snivel," Liddy snapped, and the same kids clapped. Leary's condemnation of the Gulf War and Liddy's justification of the action received equally tepid applause—from the same students. One student actually prefaced a question with a reference to Liddy's "Watergate testimony," which caused the tight-lipped hard-guy to lift up like a bottle rocket. It had to be frustrating for the former outlaws, and at one point Leary even jumped to the microphone and boomed, "Are you asking me if I still do drugs? I *do!*" when in fact no one had asked any such thing.

What the Class of '91 appears to be interested in is the Class of '91. "Count how many people have dyed hair," said one of the kids sitting behind me as he peered around the auditorium. In fact, the only real emotion the audience exhibited all evening came when Liddy called classes in black studies and women's studies examples of "too much education and too little training." That generated the boos, hisses, and catcalls one would think he deserved for breaking into Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office.

It made for a pretty lame evening. No one asked Leary if he felt just a *little bit* responsible for the social climate that has led to the crack epidemic. No one asked Liddy if he really intended to whack Jack Anderson. No one even asked either one of them how they justified taking money for a canned caricature of argument like the Great Debate. Can it be that today's students aren't even knowledgeable enough to be obnoxious?

The two kids behind me had been looking at a Student Union film calendar as we waited for the debaters to take the stage.

"Malcolm Ten," one of them said.

"Malcolm X," his friend corrected him.

"I hate sequels," said the first, undeterred. □

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Gene Gibbons

THE MISSION THING

Those who doubted President Bush's willingness to liberate Kuwait weren't following the man very closely.

Last Thanksgiving Day, at a dusty desert outpost in eastern Saudi Arabia close to the Kuwaiti border, George Bush warned of the fury that would descend on Iraq if it refused to withdraw from the tiny Gulf emirate it had overrun on August 2. "So far, I've tried to act with restraint and patience," he said, squinting at hundreds of U.S. Marines and British "Desert Rat" tank troops gathered before him in the setting sun. "But Saddam is making the mistake of his life if he confuses an abundance of restraint with lack of resolve. . . . This is no exercise. This is a real-world situation and we're not walking away until our mission is done and the invader is out of Kuwait—and that may well be where you come in."

At the time, Bush's stern rhetoric seemed so much bravado, like his visit to the Gulf—made for television and perhaps marginally useful in bluffing Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait without a fight. Even within the White House, it was widely assumed that the first big crisis of the post-Cold War era would be resolved with some sort of messy compromise. One less Iraqi Army later, when Bush speaks, people listen. But it should have been clear from the start that this President, portrayed by his critics as hesitant, short-sighted, and a bit of a wimp, would throw the book at Baghdad if necessary and not lose a moment's sleep over it.

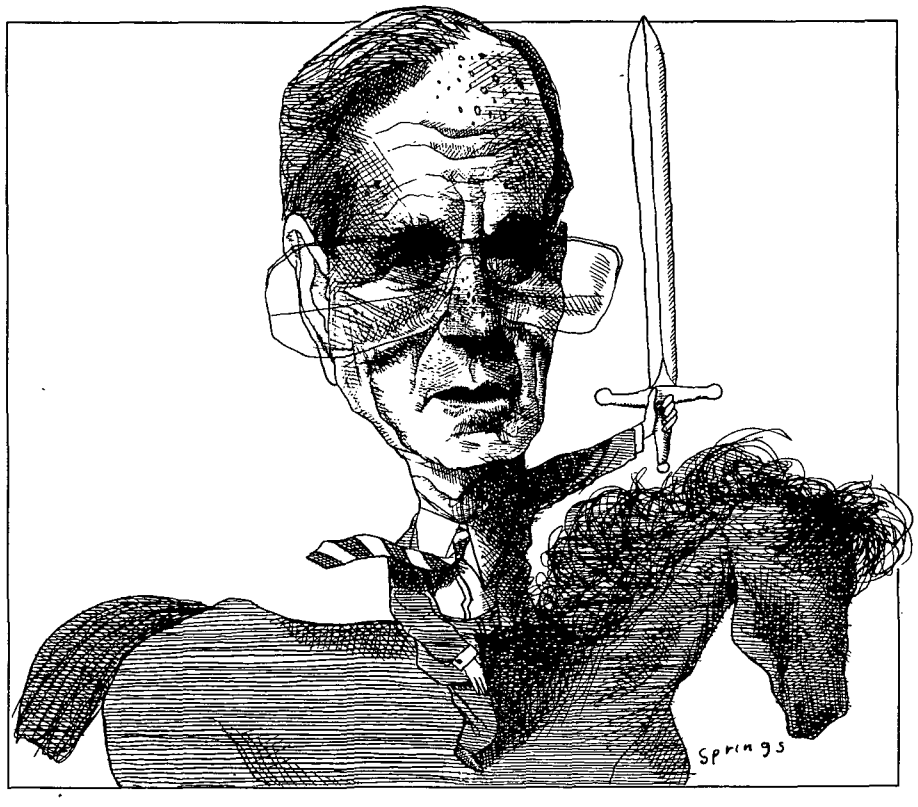
Bush, a self-styled Texas good ol' boy with the standards of a flinty New England schoolmaster, tipped his hand when he said the plight of thousands of U.S. and other third-country nationals in Kuwait and Iraq would not affect his policy. This set him apart from Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, both of whom subordinated larger national interests to concern for the suffering of a few unfortunate citizens. And it reflected an element of Bush's background that his detractors ignore—his experience as a World War II Navy pilot who lost two friends and narrowly escaped death himself when his plane was shot down near a Japanese-held island in 1944. Anyone schooled in the art of war is taught that the mission is paramount. All other considerations, including possible loss of life, are secondary. By signaling that he was ready to write off Iraq's unlucky foreign "guests," the President added gravity to his oft-repeated statement that he was "deadly serious" about reversing Iraq's invasion.

Moreover, Bush's two-year record as America's leader showed him to be a warrior-President. In 1989 alone, he ordered Delta Force commandos to San Salvador in an effort to rescue American military advisers, provided air cover to help Philippine President Corazon Aquino survive a coup, and used paratroops and airpower to topple Panamanian strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega. In the fall of 1990, he sent the Marines to evacuate the besieged U.S. Embassy in Monrovia at the height of the Liberian civil war.

In the early days of the Gulf crisis, Bush's instincts were reinforced by Margaret Thatcher, Britain's remarkable prime minister, who lost a Conservative party power struggle and resigned midway through the seven-month Gulf crisis. (Bush learned of her unexpected decision while visiting the troops on November 22. One young Marine told the President he was disappointed. "I thought she would have duked it out," the lad said.)

"I never expected Saddam to withdraw and therefore thought that we should have to use force to eject him," Mrs. Thatcher recalled during a visit to Washington in March, saying she was guided by her experience in 1982 when an Argentine junta invaded the Falkland Islands. "Dictators do these things and they do not withdraw. They can't, because they would lose face with their people," she said.

While preparing for war with bold strokes, like the first major military reserve callup since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, Bush worked the diplomatic circuit unceasingly to muster international backing for the buildup, drawing on leaders won over by the personal touches for which the President is famous. Turkish president Turgut Ozal was a case in point.



A few days before his inauguration in 1989, Bush received the short, heavyset Turk in his vice-presidential office in the Old Executive Office Building, and afterwards escorted him to a waiting limousine. As they exchanged farewells, Ozal remarked that it would be hard for him, the leader of a small country, to reach Bush after he entered the White House. "Not at all," Bush said, appearing genuinely pained at the thought. "My door is always open to you."

That small gesture helps explain why Ozal overrode strong domestic political opposition and sided with Bush from the start, severing a vital Iraqi oil pipeline through Turkey and providing key bases for U.S. warplanes.

Bush's dogged determination to maintain a relationship with China, in spite of Tiananmen Square and congressional protests that he was kowtowing to Deng Xiaoping, helped secure Peking's de facto support of his policy in the U.N. Security Council. And by persuading Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev at the September 9 Helsinki summit to agree in principle to the use of force, Bush completed Saddam's encirclement.

"We are united in the belief that Iraq's aggression must not be tolerated. . . . If the current steps fail to end it, we are prepared to consider additional ones consistent with the U.N. Charter," Bush and Gorbachev said in a joint communiqué. Secretary of State James Baker told reporters at the summit that what Bush and Gorbachev were hinting at was invoking an article of the charter that provides for collective self-defense—an interpretation that went unchallenged by the Soviets. →

Gene Gibbons is senior White House correspondent for Reuters.

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From the start, Bush and his top advisers—Baker, Vice President Dan Quayle, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Gates, and White House chief of staff John Sununu—a group that came to be called "The Big Eight," knew that the anti-Iraq coalition was fragile and that the window for action was narrow. They knew that Soviet economic troubles and ethnic unrest threatened Gorbachev's hold on power, raising questions about the long-term stability of the partnership between Moscow and Washington. They also knew that an extended U.S. ground stay in the Gulf would be problematic because of the weather and cultural and religious factors. During his Thanksgiving visit, Bush got a firsthand taste of the bleak, gritty desert environment in which the troops had to operate. He also experienced the religious sensitivities U.S. forces had to cope with, when he was forced to go to a warship anchored in international waters off the Saudi coast to participate in Thanksgiving worship.

Adding to pressure for swift, decisive action were reports of Iraqi atrocities in Kuwait. During Bush's visit to the Gulf, the exiled Kuwaiti ruler, Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, showed him a batch of gruesome color photographs of people who had been beaten or tortured. And the incident on November 8 at Jerusalem's Temple Mount, when Israeli security forces killed more than a dozen unarmed Palestinian protesters, raised fears within the White House that sooner or later Saddam would drive a wedge between the United States and her Arab allies.

"I've not been one who has been convinced that sanctions alone would bring [Saddam] to his senses," Bush revealingly admitted during a Latin American goodwill tour shortly after the U.N. Security Council voted on November 29 to authorize the alliance to use force to liberate Kuwait unless Iraq withdrew by January 15. Although he had previously kept his doubts about the effectiveness of sanctions to himself, Bush had dropped hints about which way he was leaning even before the U.N. action.

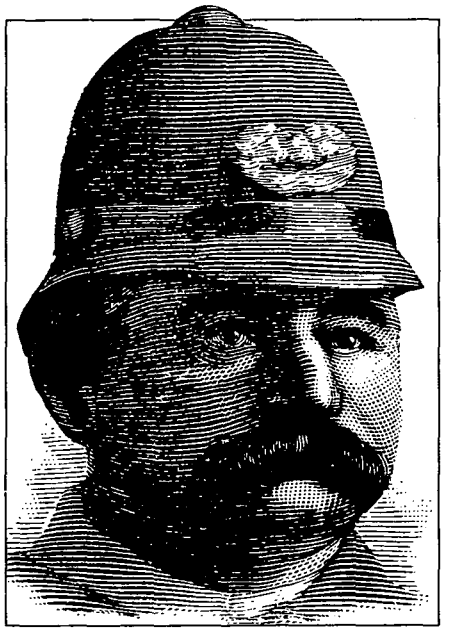
The most obvious was his announcement on November 8 that U.S. forces in the Gulf would be doubled "to ensure that the coalition has an adequate offensive military option." But he had offered glimpses of his state of mind while traveling the country earlier in the fall to stump for Republican congressional candidates. One occasion that stood out was a Vermont breakfast speech for Rep. Peter Smith (who eventually lost to Bernie Sanders, Burlington's Socialist mayor). Outside the hotel when Bush arrived were more than 200 demonstrators carrying signs and placards reading: NO BLOOD FOR OIL.

It was the largest protest Bush had seen to that point and, coupled with a flurry of newspaper reports suggesting that the Saudis were ready to make a deal with Iraq, it led him to strike a defiant tone. "There can never be compromise—any compromise—with this kind of aggression," he said sharply, adding new fire to his Gulf crisis rhetoric. "It isn't oil that we're concerned about. It is aggression. And this aggression is not going to stand." The news media, focusing at the time on the budget battle and a Republican rebellion over Bush's flip-flop on taxes, gave little notice to his Burlington speech.

One less Iraqi Army later, when Bush speaks, people listen.

Though unwilling to compromise, Bush was prepared to try to reason with Saddam—thus his offer on November 30 to receive Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz in Washington and send Jim Baker to Baghdad to meet the Iraqi leader. Baghdad unsuccessfully sought to capitalize on a flaw—Bush's failure to set a time limit for the Baker visit. But, whether by accident or design, his overture proved a strategic coup. It not only froze growing congressional and public opposition to U.S. intervention, buying time for the transfer of three armored divisions from Western Europe to the Gulf, where they went on to spearhead the allied ground offensive; it also created a short-lived climate of reduced tension that prompted Iraq to free its hostages.

Bush was unappeased by the hostage release, which occurred during his Latin American trip. "I think you can make the case that this facilitates the tough decisions that might lie ahead," he said. "When you don't have Americans there, and if force is required, that's just one less worry I've got."



The march to war quickened over the Christmas season. Bush took his family to Camp David for a long, quiet holiday that was only occasionally interrupted by meetings of the Big Eight, and he returned to Washington after New Year's Day strengthened in his resolve to stand firm. "The President came to the senior staff meeting on January 3 and told us he had wrestled with all the moral issues involved and was more certain than ever he was doing the right thing," a senior White House official said.

Two weeks later, after abortive Geneva peace talks between Baker and Aziz, a close pro-war vote in Congress, and the expiration of the U.N. deadline, U.S. Tomahawk cruise missiles and allied bombers began raining destruction on Baghdad—the Persian Gulf War was on. One scene lingers from that fateful day—hours before the war commenced, Bush and Baker, his closest friend, lunched together in the White House residence and afterwards walked back to the Oval Office silent and deep in thought. When a reporter asked, "Is there any hope of avoiding war?" the two men simply looked past him.

Only once in the long crisis did Bush let the strain show publicly. That happened three days after the invasion when ABC's Ann Compton was telling him about a pro-Iraqi interview given by Jordan's King Hussein and Bush snapped, "I can read, what's your question?" Characteristically, he sent a handwritten note of apology to Compton the next day.

But there were many moments of high drama at the White House. The most vivid occurred on the second day of the war, when Iraqi Scud missiles first slammed into Israel. "It was a very tense time," a top Bush adviser said. "There was a real fear that Israel would retaliate, the coalition would fall apart, and we'd be fighting alone." That night, Bush made the first of several telephone calls to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to urge restraint, and had to argue at length to persuade him. "He had some very difficult conversations with Shamir," the adviser said. "It's pretty tough to call up the head of a country right after he's had a missile attack and ask him not to strike back."

Bush displayed his diplomatic agility yet again in defusing a Soviet ceasefire proposal that would have saved the Iraqi Army from collapse. Some members of his war council, including Quayle and Cheney, saw Soviet treachery in the maneuver, but Bush did not. One official said, "He understood that Gorbachev wanted to be a player and felt we needed the Soviet Union in the post-war period to help us with these problems. 'Don't worry about this,' he told us."

Through it all, Bush seemed to relish working the crisis. Far from it being a lonely ordeal for him, he seemed glad of the challenge and supremely confident of his ability to master it. Acting as if he hadn't a care in the world, he took aides and reporters on a long, punishing "power walk" on the beach near his Kennebunkport, Maine, vacation home the day the Soviet truce bid was unveiled—and regaled his entourage with shaggy-dog stories when he wasn't exhorting them to pick up the pace.

Aides say that was not the private Bush. "There wasn't much humor in the inner councils between January 17 and February 23," one of his confidants revealed. "People would begin meetings with jokes and things and the President never joined in. It was the one personality change we noticed. The war was consuming for him."

Unlike Lyndon Johnson, who personally selected bomb targets in Vietnam, and Carter, who was on an open line to his field commanders during the tragic Desert One raid to rescue U.S. hostages in Iran, Bush was not so preoccupied that he allowed himself to micromanage the operation. He spoke to Desert Storm commander Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf only twice during the conflict—on the second day of the ground offensive, when he called to offer congratulations on its success; and forty-eight hours later, when he called to tell Schwarzkopf he planned to announce the suspension of hostilities. "Kuwait is liberated. The Iraqi Army is defeated. Our objectives are met," Bush told the American people in a speech from the Oval Office that night.

Mike McCurry, a former spokesman for the Democratic National Committee and now a political strategist for the opposition, has called Bush's performance a "remarkable display" of presidential leadership. "He was so determined and so focused and so persistent in prosecuting the war. It's almost as if George Bush's entire life and entire career was geared for this moment."

"I guess there's a really good feeling out in the country," Bush told a visitor a few days after he had clinched the first major U.S. military victory since World War II. "I can hardly wait to get out and see it for myself." □

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P. J. O'Rourke

IN DEFENSE OF DEFENSE

U.S. military spending is the best (and cheapest) life insurance the taxpayer can buy.

Author's note: The following analysis of our country's defense policy has been—to use a favorite government phrase—OTBE'ed (overtaken by events). The Defense section of my new book was originally written in the spring of 1990. It was revised in the fall of that year, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. But at that time I assumed Saddam Hussein would turn tail and scuttle back to Baghdad. I was wrong, though not as wrong as Saddam.

It is now the middle of February 1991. Half a million American troops are in the Mideast for the duration. (So am I, for that matter.) We can guess, but not know, how the Gulf War will turn out. And my book has to go to press. Another revision would be pointless, so I'll leave the chapter as it is, only injecting here a few addenda and I-told-you-so's:

- *The extreme concern about limiting civilian casualties and "collateral damage" in Iraq is prefigured in the fight for Panama City described below.*
- *I assume that a "non-linear" battle, such as Operation Just Cause was, will be fought—on a much larger scale—in Kuwait and Iraq. And I assume it will meet with the same quick success.*
- *The 1989 press hysteria about the usefulness of the Stealth fighter was, indeed, hysterical.*
- *I was right about Russia getting horrible again.*
- *My pride in American technology, as exemplified by the Aegis Missile Cruiser USS* Mobile Bay, *proved to be better-founded than I ever could have hoped.*
- *My host aboard the* Mobile Bay, *Captain David Bill III, is now an admiral and the commander of the battleship USS* Wisconsin, *whose guns are, as I write, blowing immense holes in Iraqi defenses in Kuwait.*
- *I don't know the whereabouts of Col. Mike Snell, who commanded Task Force Bravo in Panama, but I'm sure he's over here someplace, and I'm sure the Iraqis will soon wish he weren't.*
- *I have seen the well-trained, well-motivated "young, clean-cut and polite sailors" of the USS* Mobile Bay *duplicated thousands of times in every branch of the service here in Saudi Arabia.*

There's only one glaring error that I find in rereading this chapter. My budget calculations are wrong. Adding up the cash contributions we are receiving from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, Japan, and elsewhere, I see that, if we play our cards right in the Gulf War, we might even make a profit.

—P. J. O'R.
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

A nation with a goofy foreign policy needs a very serious policy of defense, but for much of the post-Vietnam era we haven't had that, either. Then, in the fall of 1989, the Soviet bloc collapsed, and we were left truly confused about what to do with our guns.

For a while in 1990 there was talk about a "peace dividend." We were going to take our war-making resources and turn them to tranquil ends. Even some usually sensible politicians thought this made sense. And maybe they were right. From what I can see of modern kids, the M-1 Abrams tank is well suited to providing day-care needs. And I can understand how some people might want to retarget our Polaris missiles at the high-crime areas of America's cities —the mayors' offices, for instance.

Defense is the traditional whipping boy for budget cutters, and understandably so. Defense spending is immensely wasteful. Even if defense spending were managed by honest, clairvoyant geniuses, it would still be immensely wasteful. All forms of defense—national, personal, and even biological—are wasteful. The body's immune system is a real waste—big, sprawling old white blood corpuscles floating around all over the place doing absolutely nothing to earn their keep, not even lending paper cuts a festive hue—until the body gets sick. By the same token, soldiers and weapons do nothing unless there's a war. And, in 1990, there were about to be a lot fewer American soldiers and weapons doing that nothing. There's no telling what might have happened to our defense budget if Saddam Hussein hadn't invaded Kuwait last August 2 and set everyone to gearing up for World War 2½.

Can we count on Saddam Hussein to come along every year and resolve our defense policy debates? Given the history of the Middle East, it's possible. But we ought to do at least a little thinking for ourselves. How do we go about conducting brief, highly specific military operations in minor trouble spots? What do we do with elaborate and expensive weapons systems designed for a geopolitical reality that no longer exists? In the future, with any luck, these will be more important questions than whether to carpet-bomb Baghdad.

I went to Panama two months after the U.S. military removed Manuel Noriega from power, and found a coun-

try at peace. The night I arrived in Panama City, some political terrorist chucked a grenade into a bar full of young women and off-duty GIs. The popularity of "low-intensity conflicts" can make it hard to tell war from peace in the late twentieth century. But if a bunch of lambada dancers get hurt in a terrorist attack, this usually indicates peacetime.

One American soldier was killed and all the others were restricted to base. This left the whole J Street red-light district and all of its nudie bars—full of procurers, pickpockets, b-girls, strippers, drug pushers, bilko artists, and fat, tattooed Colombian prostitutes—with a paying clientele of me and one drunk wire-service reporter.

The girls in our particular bar might have looked okay in the middle of a real war, when a man's blood was running hot and every experience was seasoned with fear's piquant relish and heaven knew what the morrow might bring, etc. But this was peacetime, as I pointed out, and no, *gracias, señorita*, I don't care to see how the Last Supper is illustrated across your bottom.

After Operation Just Cause, Panama City was filled with trash, disorder, devastated housing, human suffering—and the parts of the city that had been fought in looked pretty bad, too. There's been a lot of squeaking and belching among journalists and other members of America's professional bed-wetting class over what happened in Panama. If you watched enough network TV reporting about security snafus and Stealth fighters missing their targets, read enough *Newsweek* exposés about U.S. deaths from friendly fire, and listened to enough Jesse Jackson on the subject of civilian casualties, you might not realize that Operation Just Cause was a success. Like modern war and peace, modern success and failure can be hard to distinguish. But let's apply a rule of thumb that is perhaps too unsophisticated for use by the national media, and call something a suc-

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cess if it succeeds. I was in Panama in 1987, during Noriega's blossom days. None of the fire was friendly then. The streets were filled with rioting riot police. Members of such wild-eyed subversive groups as the Panama City Chamber of Commerce were being heaved into jail. And the nation's drunks and thugs had been given guns and formed into "Dignity Battalions" to scare hell out of anybody who wore a necktie or owned two pairs of shoes. Believe me, Operation Just Cause was just that.

Jesse Jackson wasn't the only one complaining about civilian casualties during the U.S. incursion; Panamanians were complaining, too. They were complaining that there weren't *enough* civilian casualties—because American soldiers wouldn't shoot looters. Panama City's best shopping district, a mile-and-a-half stretch of the Via España, was destroyed, and none of it by military action, all of it by looting.

Flory Saltzman, an elderly woman with a little shop selling *mola* embroideries made by the Cuna Indians, wasn't insured. She lost her stock and furnishings and had just used all her savings to start over. "But," said Mrs. Saltzman, "if they told me today that they were going to come take Noriega and loot my store again, I'd say it was worth it."

I couldn't even find a kind word for Noriega in his old stronghold, the Chorrillo slum where the Panamanian Defense Force was headquartered and the Dignity Battalions were recruited. "We got rid of a crazy guy," said a street vendor.

Chorrillo caught fire during the fighting—was probably set on fire by the Dignity Battalions and most of it burned, leaving thousands of people without homes. "It was a lousy neighborhood anyway," said one woman with a shrug.

Operation Just Cause was well fought. There was no sign in Panama City of that kind of wild firing which has left every window, doorway, and building corner in Beirut chipped concave. There were fewer bullet holes visible in Panama than in downtown Manila or parts of Washington, D.C. Some anti-American activists, such as the Ramsey Clark–led "Independent Commission of Inquiry on the United States Invasion of Panama," claimed that more than 3,000 Panamanian civilians died in the fighting. But I was unable to find anyone in Chorrillo or J Street or the Via España or any other neighborhood, with a missing friend or relation. No inordinate number of candles were burning at any church shrines, nor did I see any of the "Have You Seen _____?" and "You Will Find Us At _____" graffiti that normally appears after episodes of urban chaos. Even the people at Americas Watch, who are so firmly convinced that America bears watching, conceded their estimate of civilian deaths was only slightly higher than the U.S. Army Southern Command's count of 202. Besides civilians, 314 Panamanian Defense Force soldiers and twenty-three members of the U.S. military were killed. There are places on this earth where you can't hold a soccer match with so few casualties.

I went to see Col. Mike Snell, who commanded Task Force Bravo, one of the Operation's four ground combat groups and the one detailed to take Noriega's Comandancia (headquarters) and seize control of the central Canal Zone. The 3,000 soldiers under Snell's command were in some of the worst fighting of the Operation, but only sixty-four were wounded and only five killed.

There's no telling what might have happened to our defense budget if Saddam Hussein hadn't invaded Kuwait and set everyone gearing up for World War 2½.

Colonel Snell was my age, 42, but with much better posture, and he emitted a glow of pride in Operation Just Cause. What made Snell so happy, however, was not the brave fighting his troops had done or the modest casualties they'd suffered doing it, but something it never occurred to me a professional soldier would prize. "Where my soldiers fought," said Snell, "their restraint was remarkable." Even in the heat of combat, he said—and the fight for the Comandancia had lasted the whole first night of the Operation—his troops had used "proportional response." That is, they didn't soften up positions with mile-wide artillery barrages or huge air strikes. To take out individuals firing at them, they relied on snipers instead of M-16 fusillades. They used 90-millimeter recoilless rifles to punch holes, right where they wanted them, in cinderblock buildings. "Minimum collateral damage—minimum injury or death of innocents," said Snell with the smack of satisfaction a Mongol Khan might have used on the words, "Killed the men and sold the women into slavery."

Snell went on to describe how his soldiers had been trained in low-intensity conflict, using live ammunition and firing on ranges dotted not only with "enemy positions" but also with "religious monuments," "non-combatants seeking cover," and "surrendering opposition forces." Snell made sure there were Spanish-speaking soldiers, including a number of Panamanian-born GIs, in every platoon and squad. And Snell followed each firefight with a pause to allow bullhorn-carrying psy-op specialists to make eloquent arguments for surrender.

The February 1990 issue of the U.S. Army's *Soldiers* magazine gave a vivid—if not very action-packed—description of fighting the way it was done in Panama:

> SSgt. Edward McCrane of C Co. [was] standing in the back of a five-ton truck, surrounded by about 200 Panamanian civilians. He and two other soldiers had stopped in the middle of an intersection. McCrane stood on the left side of the truck with a raised AK-47, speaking in Spanish. "This weapon is used by PDF . . ." He continued for about ten minutes, urging the crowd to turn in PDF members and weapons. He also warned children not to play with duds or toy guns or taunt the soldiers.
>
> People applauded and the truck moved on to the next intersection.

The non-destruction of Panama and the unslaughter of its inhabitants was the result of the United States's fighting a "non-linear battle"—concentrating on pre-assigned military objectives and not bothering to conquer territory. The Army didn't get around to securing our own embassy for two days because it saw no threat to the peace in there (which shows how little the Army knows about the State Department).

"We got to know the targets," said Snell. "The captains had books with everything about their targets, even down to what windows to shoot through for fire demonstrations." Thus Task Force Bravo was able to "demonstrate" U.S. artillery strength without unnecessary killing of Panamanians, by shelling the Comandancia's dining hall at 1:00 a.m., when it was empty except for some dead snackers.

This post-modern, neural-net, simul-fought, multiphasic info-vasion kind of war is as dependent as the rest of contemporary life on expensive technology. Six different kinds of helicopters were needed for Operation Just Cause. Without helicopters the battle for Panama City would have been fought building-to-building with terrible casualties, like the Battle of Stalingrad. Well, let's not overstate the case—like a laid-back, disorganized, tropical Battle of Stalingrad.

A variety of equipment that had not been tried in combat got tried in Panama, including the HMMWV High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle or "Hum-V," which looks like a giant malevolent basement dehumidifier, the AH-64 Apache and UH-60 Blackhawk attack and utility helicopters, the new Kevlar flak jacket and the Kaiser Billish Kevlar helmet. Only the Stealth fighter and the Air Force's stealthy manner of not reporting how it missed a target got any coverage in the American press. But the rest of the stuff worked fine, especially the Kevlar, though the helmet is as heavy and awkward as a sack of grass seed and the flak jacket is like wearing your own sauna. Of the 347 Americans hit by enemy fire, only 23 died. Of the 438 Kevlar-less Panamanians hit by our fire, 314 died.

The American Army needed not only its new equipment but its old equipment, too. The 1960s-era Sheridan light tank is still the only tank we have that can be dropped by parachute and the only tank small enough to fight in the narrow streets around the Presidential Palace and government buildings in Old Panama City. Colonel Snell said his most valuable weapon was that 90-millimeter recoilless rifle, which dates back to the Korean War. Recoilless rifles have been made obsolete by improvements in armor plate. It takes a wire-guided TOW missile to knock out a modern tank. But the Panamanians didn't have any modern tanks. And wire-guided missiles need 300 yards to get level before they can be accurately aimed. There's no place in Panama City where you can get 300 yards away from anything. Snell had to order the recoilless rifles out of mothballs five weeks before Operation Just Cause, and only a few old lifer sergeants knew how to use them.

Of course, more important than having brilliant new weapons and proven old weapons is having lots of weapons. And more important than that is having enough transport to get any weapons anywhere. And most important of all is having enough trained men—26,000 in this case—to use those weapons.

Operation Just Cause was launched at 1:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 20, 1989. The director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Lt. General T. W. Kelly, said afterward, "Recall that the so-called war status was declared by Noriega on Friday, the marine was killed on Saturday, the [beating of a U.S. Naval officer and sexual molestation of his wife] occurred on Saturday. We made a decision, and in almost no time at all we were putting our paratroopers and Rangers on airplanes and send-

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ing them down there. I don't know that there's another country in the world that can do that."

There isn't.

Which brings us to the real secret behind the success of Operation Just Cause—money. Giving Manuel Noriega the bum's rush cost about $2 billion. And what makes us in America the big-dog, double-barreled, don't-tell-mother nation that we are is not how much money that was but how little. Two-billion dollars was two-thirds of one percent of our 1990 defense budget. America has the money to oust 150 tin-pot dictators a year (if there are that many dictators left) and restore democracy and human rights to 150 countries per annum (if there are that many countries that want any). And we're still only spending about a quarter of our federal budget on guns, leaving three-quarters for all that butter that isn't good for us.

About 5.5 percent of America's gross national product goes to defense. Wouldn't you be willing to spend 5.5 percent of your income to guarantee the safety of your spouse, kids, house, car, savings, investments, and sports and hobby equipment? Not only *would* you —add up your car insurance, life insurance, and homeowner's insurance premiums—you *do*. Now show me the insurance company that will come over to your house with AH-64 Apache helicopters, M-551 Sheridan light tanks, and 90-millimeter recoilless rifles if the Bahamas invades Fort Lauderdale.

An America with a peace-dividend defense budget could still mount an Operation Just Cause. We would send fewer soldiers with worse equipment and less training to Panama and the only difference would be more dead people, mostly Panamanians. But will an American defense budget from which, like the liver of Prometheus, a peace dividend is regularly torn be sufficient to guard us against all eventualities? What if some large country that is experiencing extreme national turmoil degenerates into a mad dictatorship the way Germany did in the 1930s? This is not impossible when a large country has a citizenry half-crazed from standing in line for six months at the only McDonald's in Moscow.

The Soviets, or Russians, or whoever they are these days, still have atomic bombs. I'm glad to hear them say they don't want to use the atomic bombs on us anymore. But I suspect the Soviets never did *want* to use those bombs. The most Stalinist of Soviet hard-liners—Stalin, for example—must have realized a nuclear war would be a hard thing to clean up after. Even in their most war-like frame of mind the Soviets preferred to wait until the likes of Ramsey Clark and the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the United States Invasion of Panama won a majority in the U.S. Congress, or until the entire fabric of American society was torn asunder by clashes between ACT-UP and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

The point is not whether people want to kill us. Think of all the people who want to kill us—people we used to be married to, people we're married to now, children we just grounded for using our MasterCard to call the Naked Chat Line 900 number, the next-door neighbor whose azaleas we crushed trying to back the boat trailer into our driveway. Who cares? We're not interested in whether they want to kill us, we're interested in whether they *can*. The Soviets can. So can the Chinese. And the French, for that matter. Then there are those countries, some run by complete lunatics, which have a bomb or two or could make one or will be able to make one soon: Pakistan, India, Libya, South Africa, Brazil, both Koreas . . . The need for technologically advanced defense programs does not end with Russia throwing in the towel.

Panamanians were complaining that there weren't *enough* civilian casualties—because American soldiers wouldn't shoot looters.

The military strength-in-depth needed for an Operation Just Cause, a continuing strategic threat from the dark corners of the globe—these are rational arguments against cutting the defense budget. But to debate government policy using only reason is to ignore a number of important irrational aspects of government.

In the first place, we're not going to save money or eliminate the deficit by reducing defense expenditures. It is a law of governance that democracies have to spend themselves dizzy. Citizens of democracies can, after all, tell their government to give them things. For this reason, defense spending in America is not so much a matter of Americans sacrificing to keep their country safe as it is a matter of Americans telling their government to give them defense contracts and defense industry jobs. When those jobs and contracts disappear, others will be demanded in their place. Call this a peace dividend if you like, or call it turning the pork barrel over and starting to eat from the other end. The deficit won't be affected because the same citizens who can tell their government to give them things can tell that government "No new taxes." (This being more, you'll note, than the President can do.)

If we do our deficit spending on weapons, at least we get weapons. Then, if we need the weapons, we have them. If we don't need them, no harm is done. The weapons lie around in warehouses somewhere, emitting just enough radioactivity to keep life interesting for the Friends of the Earth. But, if we do our deficit spending on social programs, we create things that are far more dangerous and terrifying than Friends of the Earth.

Social-program spending is spending done directly on the public rather than for the public's benefit. Note the mental image evoked by the very word "public": public school, public park, public health, public housing. To call something public is to define it as dirty, insufficient, and hazardous. The ultimate paradigm of social spending is the public restroom. In a democracy, if we don't spend an enormous amount of money on defense, we will have to spend it on vice, bad smells, and alarming graffiti. I rest my case.

Then there are the beneficial spin-offs from defense research to be considered, all the wonderful products that we use every day which were originally developed for military applications—guns, for instance.

Defense spending also gives people with military-type personalities jobs in the military rather than in other fields of endeavor, such as psychotherapy, to which they might be less well-suited:

LIGHTS ON IN YOUR HEAD, YOU NEURASTHENIC MAGGOT. I WANT THAT OEDIPAL CONFLICT RESOLVED BY OH NINE HUNDRED HOURS.

But the best and final argument against cutting defense cannot be put into words. It's visceral, hormonal. It is that excitement in the gut, that swelling of the chest, the involuntary smile that comes across the face of every male when he has a weapon to hand.

I traveled from the Mayport Naval Station in Florida to Charleston, South Carolina, on board the Ticonderoga Class Aegis guided-missile cruiser USS *Mobile Bay*. The *Mobile Bay* is armed with the MK-41 vertical launching system, a pair of magazines—one in the forward deck and one aft—in which a total of 122 missiles are standing on their ends like bottles in cartons of booze. All kinds of missiles are in there: anti-aircraft missiles, ship attack missiles, and, no doubt—though the Navy is always coy on this point—Tomahawk cruise missiles with nuclear warheads. The *Mobile Bay* is also armed with fully automated 5-inch guns, quad-canister harpoon missile launchers, torpedo tubes, four 50-caliber machine guns, two Phalanx close-range anti-missile miniguns, and two SH60B helicopters hangared on board, with torpedoes and guns of their own. If all else fails and something out there is still alive, there are two small, pulpit-like structures on either side of the main deck, where sailors can stand and fire hand-held Stinger missiles. All this armament is tactically integrated—guided, informed, managed, and targeted by the electronic wonders of the Aegis weapons system. And the whole thing only cost a billion dollars, less than half of our annual foreign aid to Egypt. And Egypt can't even blow itself up, let alone anything else.

The *Mobile Bay* is 567 feet long, almost four times as long as the Statue of Liberty would be if the Statue of Liberty were lying on its side and floating in the water (which makes no sense, but there are journalistic bylaws requiring comparisons of this type whenever anything very large is being described). The *Mobile Bay* is fifty-five feet wide, displaces 9,516 tons of sea water, is manned by a crew of 409, and has four 80,000-horsepower gas-turbine engines, essentially the same kind that power a DC-10. The top speed is so top that it's top secret. The Navy will admit to "in excess of 30 knots" (34¼ mph), but crewmen told me that at full power the *Mobile Bay* stands up out of the water like a cigarette boat, maneuvers like a windsurfer, and can come to a dead stop from full throttle in two ship lengths.

The *Mobile Bay* "Welcome Aboard" pamphlet was full of Statue-of-Liberty-on-its-side-style information. Building the ship "required enough steel to fabricate 4,000 cars, aluminum sufficient to produce 26 million soft drink cans, over 200 miles of electrical cable . . . " There is enough fuel on board, the pamphlet said, "to run the family car nearly 25 million miles." I always wish the people who figure these things out would just keep going: "The ship's bilge pumps could drain all the ecologically significant wetlands in Oregon in 24 hours. . . . The hawsers and bowlines carried aboard the *Mobile Bay* are long enough to hang every Democrat elected to Congress since Roosevelt's second term." And so forth.

The *Mobile Bay* is not, however, very impressive to see. It has a tall, boxed-in, blank-sided superstructure that gives it a floating car-barn look. And the only immediately discernible weapons, the two dinky 5-incher gun turrets, are not the kind of thing that would make for dramatic Liberty Bond poster art.

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Modern naval warfare is an indoorsy thing. There are almost no portholes on the *Mobile Bay*. The captain had to have one custom-fitted in his stateroom so he could keep an eye on the foredeck without going to his battle command post and watching it on TV. Once off the deck in the *Mobile Bay*, you might as well be in a submarine or a factory basement. Only on the bridge—with the helmsmen, look-outs, and officers bent over navigational charts—is there any sense of being at sea.

The night before we sailed, I went for a drink with the *Mobile Bay* commander, Capt. David Bill III. In a bar by the docks we ran into a former chief petty officer of Captain Bill's, now retired, a big man with an important gut, a variety of tattoos, and graying hair cut the length of toothbrush bristles. My father was a chief petty officer and so was my uncle, and I know the type. And I know the Navy has changed for certain because, after a couple of beers, Captain Bill turned to me and said, "This is one of the best chiefs I ever had on the *Mobile Bay*—you ought to see what this man can do with a computer."

In the morning, the *Mobile Bay* left the Mayport Naval Station and steamed —that is, gas-turbined—out to sea. The departure was so smoothly effected and the engines so quiet in their puissance that I was having breakfast in the officers' mess and didn't know I was gone. I spent the next two days wandering through this repository of my tax dollars trying to discover what defense spending buys.

It buys complexity. The *Mobile Bay* is the most complex thing I've ever been in, not counting love. All the spaces of the ship are filled with nests of valves and switches, and transversed by ganglia of pipes and wires. To attempt any real understanding of how it all works is to slide into that mood of childish despair at having taken the alarm clock apart. Defense spending also buys cleanliness. The *Mobile Bay* is unnaturally clean, cleaner than anything ever is in civilian life. Every crease of every corner of the ship is tended every day. And not only is there incessant scrubbing and mopping but eternal chipping and brushing besides, so that, in the course of a two-year cycle, all surfaces, however inaccessible, and every rivet, nut, and bolthead will have been repainted. Each of these items is also numbered. Every hatch, pipe, bulkhead, gangway, locker, compartment, and nameless do-funny has a number stenciled on it, and that number tells an adept just what the object is and where, exactly, its proper place is within the ship. The *Mobile Bay* is so clean and organized as to mock God for the frowzy quantum-physics universe he created.

The crew of the *Mobile Bay* lives in tiny and drab (but clean and organized) quarters. The men, petty officers, and junior officers sleep in triple-deck bunk beds that look like something you'd organize your CDs in. I tagged along with the executive officer, the ship's second-in-command, when he went to brief a group of enlisted men in the crew mess. The mess was not a very martial place. It had a cute name—Patriot's Landing —a salad bar, hanging plants, and fake carriage lamps over fast-food-restaurant-style tables for four. Nor were the sailors traditional. They were young, clean-cut, and polite. The *Mobile Bay* was soon to head out on an extended tour of duty in the Pacific, and the executive officer was telling the men what to expect. When the time came for questions, the sailors didn't ask about the strip joints of Thailand or what kind of tattoos to get or how many Hong Kong wharf rats a Yankee swab could be expected to whip in a fair fight after consuming fifty beers on shore liberty. They wanted to know how many phone calls home they would be able to afford per month and details of health care and housing allowances for dependents.

Defense spending also buys cleanliness. The *Mobile Bay* is unnaturally clean, cleaner than anything ever is in civilian life.

After the briefing I went to the aft deck to watch the helicopters land and take off. Here, at least, was some of the noise and excitement that practicing for war should have. The helicopters were trying out their RAST (Recovery Assist Security Transfer) systems, which can bring a chopper down in one piece in the worst of weather. The helicopter hovers above the ship and dangles a cable onto the deck. Then two brave, or anyway dutiful, sailors run out and hook this cable to another cable, which is attached to what is basically an enormous motor-driven spin-casting reel. The helicopter is then hauled down and landed like a giant air bass. Still the RAST, and the helicopters too, seemed more ingenious than bellicose. Like the fighting in Panama, the operation of the *Mobile Bay* has more to do with intelligence, training, and technology than with plain, straightforward killing.

The largest part of the *Mobile Bay* is given over not to guns or men but to electronics. It is the huge, flat, octagonal Aegis radar antennae that determine the missile cruiser's chest-of-drawers shape. And in the upper middle part of that chest of drawers, about where the dress shirts and good handkerchiefs would be, is the *Mobile Bay*'s reason for being. This is a single windowless space, huge by shipboard standards, maybe thirty feet deep by forty feet wide, called the "Combat Information Center." The room glows with the graveyard light of cathode tubes beaming data blips at the solemn faces of military technicians, and the only sounds are the snicking of computer keyboards and the low buzz of speech into headset microphones. The CIC is so complex that it moves the uninitiated beyond confusion to catatonic awe. No science fiction movie-set design can capture the sheer inexplicability of science fact—which partly can't be explained for security's sake and partly just can't be explained to someone who was a college English major. (The high school–educated Navy enlisted men who run all this, however, understand it completely.)

The Combat Information Center is the command post for the Aegis weapons system. And what the Aegis is is the shield of Zeus, for which it was named. The *Mobile Bay* uses a kind of radar—phased-array—that sends out multiple pulses capable of tracking hundreds of targets at once. The phased-array radar is combined with sonar, magnetic detection devices and various other types of sensors to create a 500-mile-wide bubble of electronic protection around the ship. The MK-41 vertical launch missiles can then destroy anything within that bubble.

The Aegis radar can detect a basketball 150 miles away and a high-altitude bomber a thousand miles off. The Aegis computers receive information not only from the *Mobile Bay*'s own sensors but also from those carried on its helicopters and on board all the other ships in its fleet. The *Mobile Bay* is also linked, by satellite, to computers in the Pentagon. The resulting monstrous inpouring of real-time data is filtered, distilled, and channeled at the individual video monitors in the Combat Information Center and then flashed up on four bay window–sized green LED displays arrayed along the CIC's port side.

Here, in front of these screens, seated like four judges on the bench, are the captain of the *Mobile Bay*, the admiral of the fleet, and their respective aides. From these great seats of authority (actually government-issue padded Naugahyde swivel chairs), war can be fought across a large portion of the earth and large parts of that large portion can be destroyed by nuclear attack. The screens show schematic maps centered upon the position of the *Mobile Bay*. The scale of the maps can be changed at the touch of a keyboard from continent-wide to 6 inches = 1 mile. On these maps are shown every airplane, surface ship, and submarine within the Aegis bubble—ultra-lights, cabin cruisers, Jacques Cousteau and all. Friendly aircraft are indicated on the screens with the top half of a circle, friendly undersea objects with the bottom half of a circle, and friendly surface ships with a circle itself. Similarly, diamond shapes indicate hostiles and squares indicate unknowns. At another punch of the keyboard the Aegis system can be left to think for itself, and all the little diamond shapes will be automatically blown to no shape at all.

"Any questions?" asked the junior lieutenant who was showing me around. But no question I could think of seemed big enough to do the Aegis justice.

"Does it work?" I said at last, and a strange expression came across the mild and pleasant features of the young lieutenant. "It works as advertised," he said with an evil grin. "The *Mobile Bay* can launch all 122 of its missiles in two minutes, though sixteen in the air at one time is really the practical limit," said the lieutenant, mild and pleasant again. That is, in less time than it takes to count the dollars in the U.S. defense budget by billions, this one boat can loose more military power on the world than mankind used in all its history from the first australopithecine flint-tossing spat in the Olduvai Gorge until Hiroshima.

I went down to the foredeck and meditated on the thoroughly uninteresting visible part of the vertical launching system. Each missile has its own corrugated-metal canister within the magazine and each canister has a square lid on the ship's deck, a sort of yard-wide, solid-steel version of the lid marked "sift" on a can of Durkee's ground black pepper.

I couldn't talk the captain into firing a missile for me, but he gave me a videotape of a test firing, and I watched this in the VCR-equipped fleet admiral's stateroom. Even in slow motion there was nothing slow about the launch. The flip-lid whips open and for a moment you see the bald top of something emerging in light and smoke, a high burlesque of a jack-in-the-box, then the ship's deck is covered by a tower of blast and dazzle, blanketing one bright, rising, white, fiery column—*this* is the way to waste government money. □

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TAKING STOCK

by Benjamin J. Stein

Sunday

Dinner at the Beverly-Wilshire. It's a huge fund-raising thing for The Fund for Animals, a charity run by some Hollywood types who really love animals. Gretchen Wyler is the CEO, and, to tell the truth, she's done amazing work. Really amazing. Just for example, a few days ago she arranged for a pound in north San Diego County to get a big chunk of money to care for the dogs and cats of young Americans serving in the Persian Gulf.

There were about seven hundred people there. I sat at a table with my pal Al Burton, who produces the new "Lassie." As a matter of fact, Lassie was sitting at our table, too. I'm not kidding. She was lying on my feet for a good part of the evening. Her owner and trainer, Bob Weatherwax, kept feeding her snacks, and she was as well behaved as you would expect. Very warm and furry, too. In many ways, the best dinner date I've had in months.

Next to us was a table with Sid Caesar and, right near that group, Milton Berle, looking very feisty. Isabella Rossellini was a few tables away, looking awfully well. But the high point for me was running into Jimmy Stewart when I went looking for the men's room. I told him how great he was and how much I loved him in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. He gulped and said that he was looking for his wife and had I seen her anywhere.

As always, I was amazed by how tough the people in the room looked. How do they get that way?

Monday

Tommy, my unbelievably cute three-and-a-half-year-old handsome devil batboy son, has a terrible cough. Hence, a trip to his pediatrician, who has an office in a building in Beverly Hills. It's a sight that would have made Hippocrates vomit. The doctor has a suite with walls of posters and photos of his movie star and athlete patients (parents of patients, I guess). They're signed. Household names. Hey, what's this confidentiality crap? Medicine is business.

The doctor rushed into the examining room, looked at Tommy, asked me a few questions, and pronounced that the devil boy had bronchitis. "Give him some of this," he said, producing a bottle of cough syrup from somewhere under his tunic.

"Is it viral or bacterial?" I asked.

The doctor looked at me with pure hatred. "It's bacterial."

"Maybe he should have an antibiotic then."

The doctor looked at me even more angrily. "All right," he said. From somewhere else he produced a bottle of pills.

"What are these?"

"Amoxicillin," he snapped.

"I'm not sure he can swallow pills that big."

Now the doctor switched to supercilious contempt. "They're chewable," he said. "They taste like bubble gum. He'll love them."

"He's also all stuffed up," I said.

"Get him something at a drug store. Child-strength something."

"I'm concerned that he has some kind of lingering virus," I said. "He's sick all of the time. Maybe his immune system is compromised." (I used to go out with a doctor a long time ago.)

"He's fine," the doctor said, "but keep him out of pre-school for a few days. He could easily pick up another flu."

"I thought he had a bacterial thing," I said. "Flu is viral. Does he have a viral thing or a bacterial thing?"

Now the doctor looked as if he might kill me with his scalpel. "He might recover from his bacterial bronchitis, and still be weak from it, and catch a viral thing. His immune system might be compromised," he said mockingly. Then he turned on his heel and walked away. No looking me in the eyes even once, no handshake. The bedside manner of an Iraqi Republican Guard.

Total elapsed time by my watch: three minutes. The bill, due and payable before I can leave: one hundred and three dollars, including the medicine, which was marked up by a factor that would have made Harry Winston jealous.

There's too much talk about white-collar crime, I thought. How about "white-smock crime"? Or for plumbers who keep you waiting and never show up, how about blue-collar crime? Or, for receptionists who call you by your first name even if they never met you, pink-collar crime? Or, for surfers who cut you off on Pacific Coast Highway, no-collar crime? There's a lot of crime out there.

Off to lunch with my small businessman pal Lenny. His latest product is a lotion that can be applied at the beginning of a flight from JFK and have the user looking like he has gotten a suntan by the time the plane lands at LAX.

Lenny has just gotten back from shooting a series of exercise videos in Romania. "Dracusize," he calls them. The girls in the videos do their sexy stuff in skintight black outfits with capes, and sometimes with fangs. They do their aerobics on the battlements of a castle in Transylvania. "I love Romania," Lenny said. "The people there don't have an attitude problem the way people here do. That's one good thing about Communism: when it's over, the people are so grateful."

Back to Malibu for dinner with my new best friend, whom I'll call Hyman Moth. I'm not going to tell you his real name, but you would know it. He's a man in his late eighties. He lives in a house above Broad Beach that's not really that impressive. I think that the people of England gave the Duke of Marlborough a bigger house after the Battle of Blenheim, but, still, it's a nice house.

Hyman Moth loves my articles in *Barron's*. He sent me a fan letter over a year ago, and we've become pals. He used to be in the folding-box business. Then he was in the liquor business, and then—what do you know, folks?—he got to be in the casino business.

He owned a few casinos in Vegas back in the 1950s and 1960s, and he even owned major points in some casinos in Havana ". . . before Castro wrecked everything."

Tonight at dinner he was telling about his longtime friend "Meyer Lansburgh," or Lansky, as his wife corrected him. "Smart as a whip," Hyman Moth recalled. "And always thinking about the angles. But also an honorable guy. You could count on him to count the money straight and never keep anything for himself that he wasn't supposed to have.

"He was the kind of guy that a board of directors trusts with a decision about who's going to get the points in a casino. If they tell him the points are going to

---

Benjamin J. Stein is a writer and actor living in Malibu, California. His new novel, Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?, *has just been published by St. Martin's Press.*

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Benny Siegel and some boys from Detroit, that's who the points go to. If they say the points go to someone else, that's who gets them. And Lansky never keeps anything for himself he's not supposed to have."

"What if someone wants to debate or argue about the decision of the board of directors?"

Moth looked genuinely bewildered. Then he looked nostalgic and then sad. "Well, in that case, people would get shot. But then there wouldn't be any more debate. Like in Havana, that guy, that guy who was running it before Castro, before anyone ever heard of Castro, what was his name?"

"Batista?" I suggested.

"Right. Batista, also a very honorable guy. He had thirty points in most of the waterfront casinos, and if he said he would take thirty points, that's all he took. But even he trusted the board of directors and didn't argue. And he trusted Lansky. But he was always figuring the angles. Always, but then he made sure he shared what he had figured out."

Moth's son Ron, an accountant in a major firm, ate his lamb chop and seemed to be on another planet until the dessert was served. Then he said, "I hear you're an economist. Do you know if crime is counted in the GNP?"

I said I thought it was, in some very complicated way, but that I would look into it further.

After dinner, we talked about stocks, and I listened to Hy's many hits and misses. His nurse, an almost unbelievably beautiful Danish woman, kept asking Hy if he needed anything and bringing him mysterious pills.

Back at my condo in West Hollywood, the Shoreham Rock 'n' Roll Towers, I met a woman who was having a nervous breakdown. I've become a magnet for such women. They tell me of their sad lives and their losses and gains in the emotional stock market. She's a preacher's daughter from Tupelo, who, by a strange series of events, has wound up as an agent here in Los Angeles. She just got divorced from her husband, an admittedly gay man from Argentina who paid her to marry him so that he could become a citizen, and then almost immediately became a male callboy. She's been on Xanax for a good long time now, and she's also been smoking a ton of marijuana, and she feels bad.

"I don't doubt it at all," I said. "It's the most amazing thing, but when you do bad things, you tend to feel bad. Isn't that amazing? And when you do good things, you tend to feel good. Isn't that even more amazing? That how we feel about ourselves is closely connected with how we behave? Like, if we do mean, awful things to people, we tend to feel really bad about ourselves? And if we do good things for people, we tend to feel really good and sleep better and all of that stuff?"

The woman looked at me sadly and nodded. "I've started to pray," she said. "I pray constantly."

"Then it's well on the way," I said. "If you really believe that God's going to help you, then you have to believe that what you're asking for is acceptable in God's eyes, and if those are the only kinds of things you pray for, you start to change your thinking, and become a happier woman."

It's hard for me to believe I say these things with a straight face, but I do, and I believe them with all my heart. This is a desert here in Los Angeles, and it's getting worse, and all great faith is born in a desert of some kind. Even all little faith.

Tuesday

Off to another audition at a casting company in the Valley, right near CBS, to try out for a part in a new sitcom to be called "U-Boat." It's about economists at the Treasury Department or speechwriters at the White House or something I know about, so I got a call.

In fact (and it's an important fact), the audition was in the upstairs of a cottage, and we "actors" waited outside on a bench on an extremely narrow balcony. I demurely picked up my lines, or "sides," as we call them, and stood in the smoggy sunshine to read them.

A woman in her early thirties, also studying sides, looked at me. Her face was splotchy and scarred, although she was an attractive woman. "Can you believe this guy is still having to get screened by the casting directors before he can see the producers?" she asked. "At his age?" She was referring to me.

"I thought you always had to see casting people," I said innocently.

"At your age?" she asked. "Imagine being an actor that long and still getting screened by casting people before you see the producers."

"Well, I'm not entirely an actor," I said. "It's really a hobby for me. I mostly write about ethics in finance and a few other issues. But I feel pretty lucky just to be here at all."

Still, her words stung. What was I doing there? What a jive concept: to be an actor, seeking and getting rejection five times a day from total strangers.

A startlingly beautiful woman named Tracy Scoggins, who was also sitting on the bench, looked at us. "I've been a regular on two series, 'Dynasty' and 'The Colbys,' " she said, "and I'm out here waiting to see this casting woman, waiting to get screened. It happens."

The first woman looked slightly chastised and tried to be nice to me. She started to pick dog hair off my suit jacket. She told me about her life. It made me want to cry. She's been an actress and a dancer all of her life. She's totally and completely broke and living in New York, and flew out here with the last money she has in the world, and she doesn't get any respect.

A fascinating iron law of human interaction: The critic who criticizes on first impression is usually mirroring the criticism he is leveling against himself. I tried to be sympathetic to her, and she was practically in tears by the time she left.

I talked to the casting woman. She reminded me that she was the caller who first put me into "The Wonder Years," at the precise wish of the producers of the show. I told her about being a White House speechwriter for Nixon and Ford.

"The ideal speech makes a point sharply and memorably, but never so sharply as to offend anyone. It is eloquent but understandable. It winks at your friends but does not arouse your enemies. It promises everything and guarantees nothing. The people who write them truly believe in what they're doing, and they feel as if they're in a fraternity of guys at a certain level of competence, devotion, reliability, and intelligence. They're like college frat brothers who also have been through a war. They can make fun of each other and criticize each other, but they can all take it and smile, and then go to the Press Club and have a drink and work all night. They're like old-time reporters, only they believe in something."

The casting woman liked it, and seemed grateful to see me. When I was through talking, I went back out to the balcony. The other actors were gone. The pile of scripts was gone. Even the bench was gone. I felt pretty sad, standing there on an empty balcony in Studio City, a helluva long way from home.

On the sidewalk next to my car someone had written, "L.A. = Losers Anonymous." At least, that's what I think it said.

Wednesday

A summons from Hyman Moth. He would like for me to come down to his palazzo on Broad Beach to talk to me "man to man" about something very important for my future. Was I free for lunch?

Lunch on Hy's flagstone patio overlooking the sand and the sea. I could tell you what famous neighbors he has, only then you'd guess who he is. The lunch was chopped melon and tuna fish salad, served by an enormous black woman named, of all things, Aphrodite.

"Ben," Hyman Moth said after he finished his tuna fish, "I don't think you make enough money."

"You're right there."

"I think that probably you'd like to make more money," he continued.

"I think so, too," I agreed.

"Now, here's my idea. I know you find out a lot about stocks and companies. I know that sometime you might find out when a company is going to do well, and then you might want to buy some shares and make some real money, and you don't have enough money

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to buy enough shares to make it worthwhile. Am I right?"

"Not exactly," I said. "I really only find out if a company is likely to go down."

Hy ignored that. "Here's what I suggest," he said. "You tell me five or six companies that you think are due to go up. I buy some stock. Twenty thousand shares, thirty thousand shares, fifty thousand shares. You don't put up any money at all. It's all my money, see?"

"I think I see."

"But if the stock goes up, we split the profit. Off the books. No one knows but you and me. You learn these things in the casino business. What do you say?"

"Gosh, Hy, thanks, but I really can't do it. I'm flattered, but I really can't take any money from you. I do love your war stories about Milken and the guys at the casinos, but I really don't think I could take any money from you."

"My money's no good?" Hy asked sadly.

"No, it's great," I said. "Just look at this house. Your money's great. Really fabulous. But I think it might not be nice for me to take your money for my ideas on stocks, which usually are the kiss of death anyway."

"Well, then, maybe we'll sell a few short. I don't usually go short, but you seem to have an incredible knack about that . . ."

"I don't ever sell short," I said. "I just don't buy."

"Well," Hyman Moth said, "think about it. There are no strings attached. None at all. Not any. If your picks go down, it's my problem. I have enough money. I won't lose any sleep over it if I lose a half a million dollars in one day."

On my way out, I passed by a man who looked like the young Harvey Keitel in *Mean Streets*, watching a game show. He cast a scary look in my direction. "Are you that smart Communist guy that Hy's been talking about?" he asked.

"Economist," I said. "Not Communist."

"Yeah? What's the difference?"

"Well, one studies the allocation of scarce goods and one wants to take away people's property and give it to the state," I said, hoping this would intimidate him.

"Like I said, what's the difference? I'm a pit boss at Nero's Violin. I believe in taking away people's property and giving it to my wife, *ha-ha-ha*."

In my little car, I felt positively giddy with delight that I had not accepted Hy's money.

Dinner at Zooma Sushi with "Rachel Halston," a middle-aged TV executive at a *very big* studio in town, which was recently taken over by Japanese people.

Rachel is from Crown Heights, Brooklyn, and until recently was named Rachel Horowitz. It made me sad that she had changed her name. It also made me sad that she could not think of a more original change. Halsted and Halston are extremely popular names to change to in Hollywood and New York. I truly wonder if there is anyone who was born with either of those names.

Anyway, Rachel had brought with her an executive woman from another, much smaller studio. This woman, Cissie Monroe, from Charleston, South Carolina, works in developing syndicated TV series, as does Rachel. Cissie is in her mid-thirties, and very attractive except for an angry outthrusting of her chin as she speaks.

Both women were slightly sweaty and out of breath, presumably from an earlier visit to their kick-boxing class. It's taught by a man recently out of San Quentin, where he served fifteen years for armed robbery, manslaughter, and rape. In San Quentin, he had learned kick-boxing, and now he was teaching it in Hollywood, mostly to women studio executives.

"Why?" I asked them as we ate our sushi. "Why do you need to know kick-boxing?"

"Why?" Cissie repeated. "Because a man might attack me at any time. People get attacked all the time in Los Angeles. Didn't you know that?"

"You live in Beverly Hills," I said. "You work in a studio with a guard and a fence. Where is someone going to attack you?"

"You never know," Cissie said. "A man could attack me anywhere. And when he does, it could be really violent. He could try to rape me and God knows what else."

"Plus," added Rachel, "it's part of my training just to be alive and energetic. Ever since I started my kick-boxing, I'm a thousand times more energetic than I was when I was twenty. I'm a very energetic girl already." She paused for a moment. "And, also, I could get attacked, too."

"The greater the wish, the greater the taboo," I said. "Where do you think you're in the most danger? In a class taught by a convicted rapist or in your house in Beverly Hills?"

"A typically sexist male comment," Cissie sneered.

"A typical Ben Stein comment already," Rachel chimed in.

Down here in Trancas, Malibu, looking at the lights of the tankers at midnight far out to sea, I remembered a trip to Williamstown, Massachusetts. Last June, my father's class at Williams College, the Class of 1935, had its fifty-fifth reunion and convocation, in the midst of many other five-year-multiple convocations. I was east on business, so I went up and watched. The graduates looked prosperous, happy, well dressed. Most of all, they looked as if they were at peace with themselves.

Williams College is startlingly beautiful in any event, but this group fit the serene confidence of the place perfectly. They were of a piece with intelligent but unpretentious architecture, the rolling, plain, but powerful grassy lawns, and the blue sky, with its fleecy clouds above the pines and maples.

One evening, my father's class had a picnic at a nearby mansion, where a minor Rockefeller had once lived. The house now belonged to Williams. It had a large lawn and a tent, under which the Williams grads of the Class of 1935 ate hamburgers and drank soda and looked happy.

Their faces were all friendliness and relaxation. The wives looked happy and relaxed too. Not everyone in the class is rich. Many of them are not perfectly healthy. The class went to school in the worst part of the worst depression of all time. The class went through war and lost many of its best. To see the engraved names of the Williams men lost in war, from the Revolution through Vietnam, staring down at me in Thompson Memorial Chapel still makes me want to cry forever.

But the Class of 1935 looked happy and relaxed, much like old comrades. I considered the worried, angry faces I see here in Malibu, in Beverly Hills, at the Shoreham Towers, and then thought of those faces, of my father and Richard Helms and the others all looking so much at peace after all they have been through. It moved me tremendously. I was moved to envy, in fact.

"But that's the whole point," my father said. "We're through with competition. Some of us were divided by being rich or poor, by being Jewish or Gentile, by being good athletes or not, by being famous or not. That was a long time ago. Now there's nothing that divides us any longer. We're all united before the only real dividing line that means anything, and we're still on the right side of it."

Out at sea, the lights of the tankers merged with the midnight stars. □

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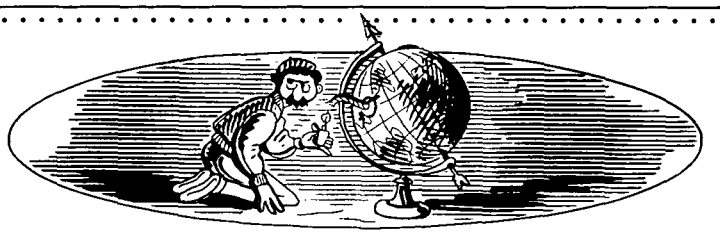


JIMMY, GO HOME!

by William McGurn

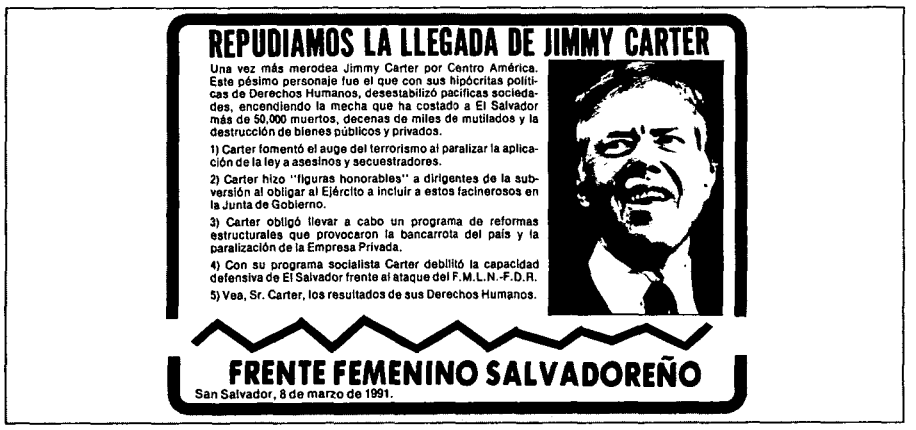
San Salvador

The first sight a visitor sees upon arrival at the city airport is a poster of a four-year-old girl on crutches with half her leg missing. *Víctima inocente de las minas del FMLN*, it says. *¿Y sus derechos humanos?*—"Victim of FMLN mines. And her human rights?"

Good question. The FMLN is the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, and as the name implies it is a Moscow-and-Georgetown-backed insurgency that has inflicted countless deaths and $2 billion in damage on this small nation since 1979. Last year, in wake of the army killing of six Jesuit priests, Washington made life a little easier for the FMLN by cutting off half of the scheduled $85 million in military assistance to the government. The guerrillas responded much as the Democratic party did to George Bush's budget summit: by launching a new offensive. The FMLN murdered more innocent civilians, imported more weapons from Nicaragua, and executed two injured U.S. soldiers whose helicopter had been downed.

I am here with the good folk of the National Republican Institute as an international observer for the March 10 municipal and congressional elections. At a cocktail party in the backyard of the American ambassador's residence, we met with other delegations, and it soon became clear that everyone is pleased the FMLN has stopped shooting long enough to allow its front groups to contest the elections. While taking solace in a much-needed gin-and-tonic—an unfeeling government is forcing Salvadorans to vote sober—I spot a familiar gringo approaching, a big, dopey smile on his face. I whisper to an uncomprehending dignitary next to me that I hope we don't have to hear still another person tell us how wonderful it is that the FMLN is participating in these elections. "*¿Cómo estás?*" the American says, slapping me on the back. "Don't you think it's wonderful that the FMLN is participating in the elections?" I ask him whether he also thinks it wonderful that David Duke is participating in elections and not clanking his irons is some chain gang, but he is too happy to take umbrage.

The Salvadorans I meet exhibit considerably more sense. In the vote itself, for example, they will give the ruling ARENA party a solid plurality, with the bulk of the remainder going to the other moderate parties, while the Communists will console themselves with the headlines of the foreign press ("Rebel-Backed Parties in Salvador Charge Fraud," the March 13 *New York Times* will shout). There are rumors that a certain ex-American president is to arrive here for the elections, and I am horrified to open a copy of *El Diario de Hoy*, one of El Salvador's two leading newspapers, to find a photograph of Jimmy Carter in an advertisement placed by something called the Salvadoran Women's Front.


REPUDIAMOS LA LLEGADA DE JIMMY CARTER
Una vez más merodea Jimmy Carter por Centro América. Este pésimo personaje fue el que con sus hipócritas políticas de Derechos Humanos, desestabilizó pacíficas sociedades, encendiendo la mecha que ha costado a El Salvador más de 50,000 muertos, decenas de miles de mutilados y la destrucción de bienes públicos y privados.
1) Carter fomentó el auge del terrorismo al paralizar la aplicación de la ley a asesinos y secuestradores.
2) Carter hizo "figuras honorables" a dirigentes de la subversión al obligar al Ejército a incluir a estos facinerosos en la Junta de Gobierno.
3) Carter obligó llevar a cabo un programa de reformas estructurales que provocaron la bancarrota del país y la paralización de la Empresa Privada.
4) Con su programa socialista Carter debilitó la capacidad defensiva de El Salvador frente al ataque del F.M.L.N.-F.D.R.
5) Vea, Sr. Carter, los resultados de sus Derechos Humanos.
FRENTE FEMENINO SALVADOREÑO
San Salvador, 8 de marzo de 1991.

But I am reassured when I read the first sentence: *Una vez más merodea Jimmy Carter por Centro América* (which my Salvadoran friends translate as "Once again, Jimmy Carter is snooping around Central America"). Evidently, there exist places where the former president is even less popular than he is at home.

This is my second stint as an international observer, and as veterans can tell you the observing is the easy part. The hard part is getting up for the full-day briefings in our hotel, some of which begin at 7:00 a.m. The parties all come in to give their spiels, as do other notables such as the auxiliary archbishop from San Salvador, Msgr. Gregorio Rosa Chávez. His Excellency tells us he personally thinks it would be better if the opposition won, but then again that might be only out of loyalty to the family business; his brothers Aristides and Salomón Enrique are *guerrilleros*. I scan my briefing papers and come across a note about the Democratic Convergence party (CD), which professes to offer a leftist alternative to the insurgency. "The largest problem for the CD is whether to break their alliance with the FMLN," says the paper. "The biggest obstacle to this is that the FMLN has a history of killing people who formally split with them." Now that's party discipline.

By the time our group is sent out with a map and a lunchbox for our trip to Cuscatlán, it is a relief to get away from the hotel. My companions for the day are an exceptionally mixed and amiable group, including a Canadian, a Catholic University professor, an Argentine congressman, and a former Reagan speechwriter. Although we hear whining from various people along the way, what we encounter mostly is a decidedly Latin administrative process balanced by immense reserves of goodwill and effort, extraordinary in a nation that has been torn apart by a 12-year civil war. Watching the press pick up on some of the quibbles in our final statement, I have to wonder how the old Union government might have fared were there an Amnesty International or *Washington Post* around to cover, say, the Emancipation Proclamation ("Lincoln Plan Falls Short, President Bent on War").

For the most part, our day is uneventful. In one town I see Franciscan nuns stroll by street vendors displaying hundreds of machetes on blankets, and elsewhere the political graffiti on the wall suggests that the people who sneak into New York City subway yards at midnight with spray cans have cousins down here. At various junctures we inquire about the possibility of taking our minibus into nearby FMLN strongholds, and the answer is always the same. *Pueden ir, pero* . . . ("You can go, but . . ."). Thinking of the soon-to-be-ended prohibition on alcohol, I push strongly for heeding the "but."

Two days later, a number of us meet with President Alfredo Cristiani over sweet coffee in an office in the presidential palace. A Georgetown alumnus (I regret to report that his socialist-minded predecessor, the late José Napoleón Duarte, was a fellow Notre Damer), President Cristiani is gracious and informal, and speaks impeccable English. In two short years in office, he has opened up the economy considerably, moved to assert civilian control over the armed forces, and started negotiations with the rebels. For his troubles the poor man has had his promised military aid slashed in half, his chief foreign-exchange earner threatened with a boycott (though El Salvador contributed free coffee to the troops of Desert Storm), and his nation itself carved up between government and rebel areas in a secret U.N. document.

One of the more distinguished Latin American affairs experts in our group points out that the only serious military threat the FMLN poses is to civilians. "The *guerrilleros* are never going to defeat the Salvadoran government," says Roxana Chahin of the International Freedom Foundation. "They can, however, continue to destroy infrastructure and keep out the foreign investment so crucial for the people's economic development." In other words, a handful of dedicated insurgents who refuse to lay down their weapons can effectively veto the clear preferences of the Salvadoran public as now expressed through seven free elections. *These* are the kind of people we should be negotiating with? □

William McGurn is the Washington bureau chief of National Review.

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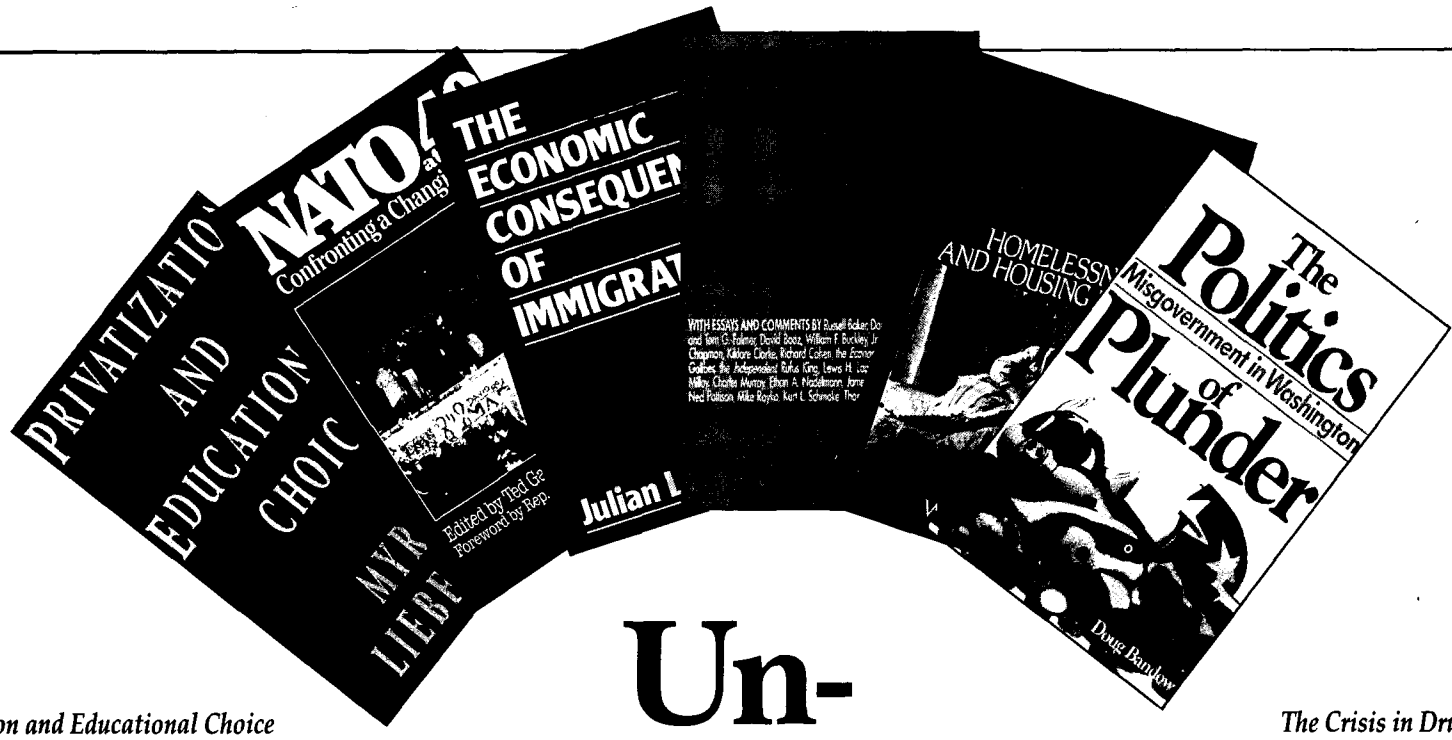

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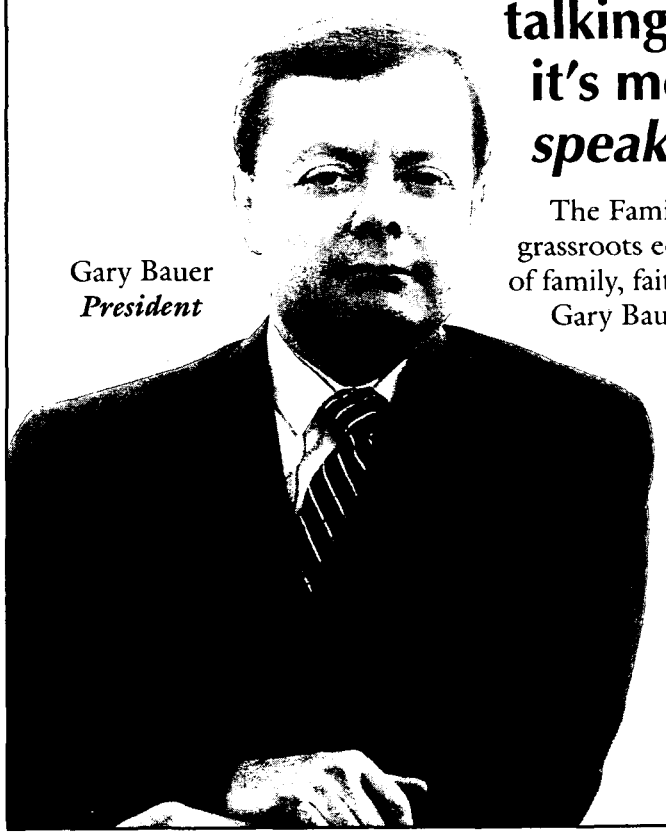

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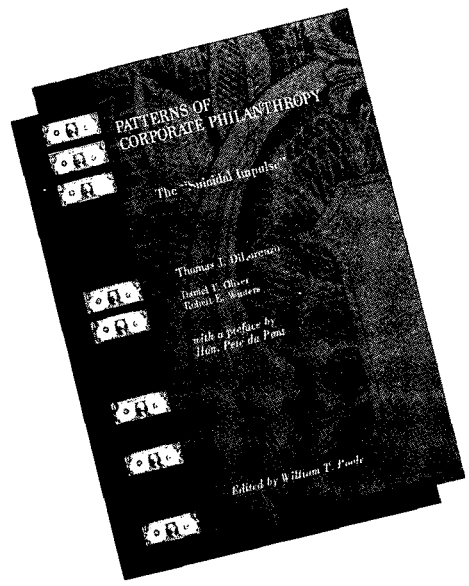

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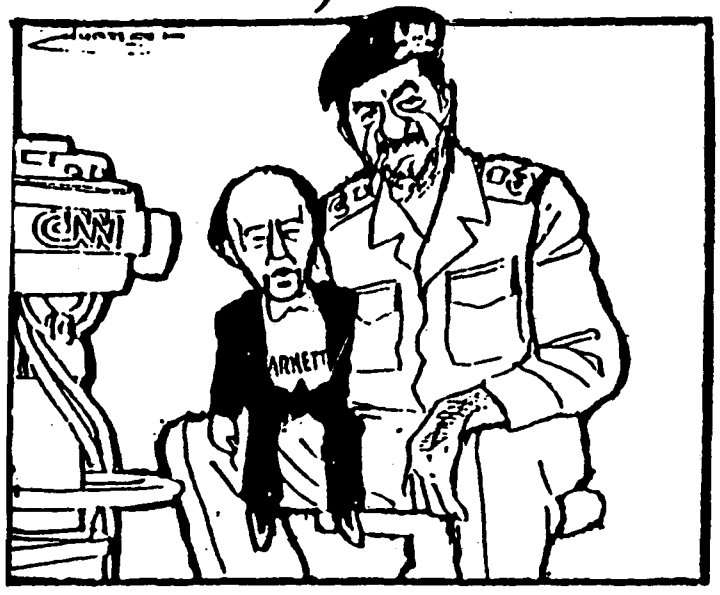

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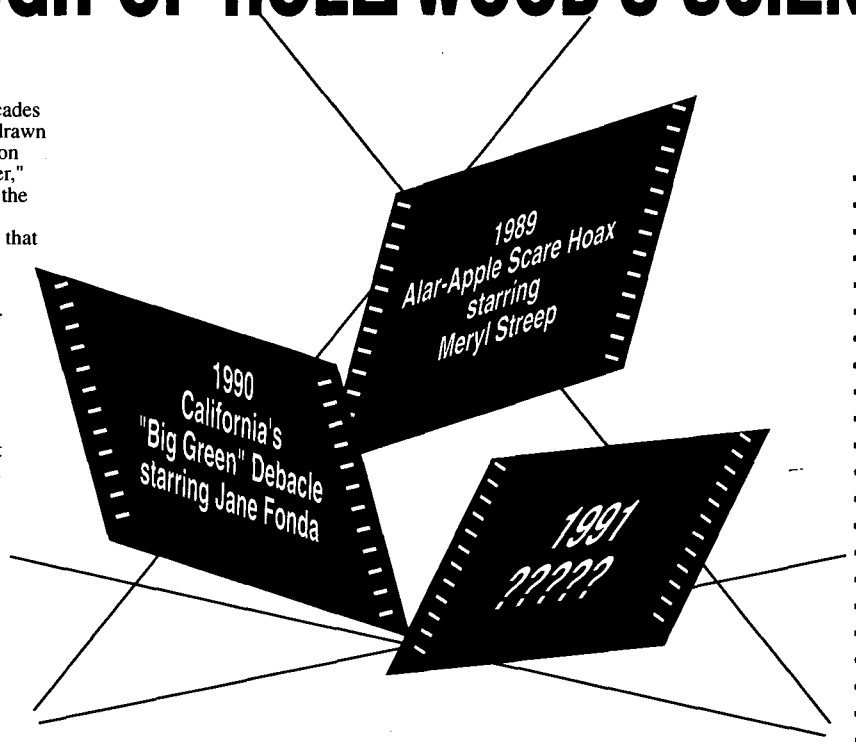

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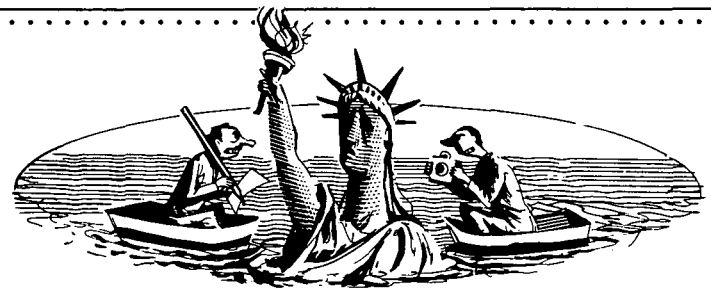

THE POWER EXECUTIVE

by Terry Eastland

Following President Bush's televised address to Congress and the nation on March 6, Dan Rather commented that the President of the United States has many powers but that his principal power is the power to persuade. The power to persuade? It's nowhere mentioned in the Constitution, and whatever else Bush was trying to do in his speech that night, he didn't need Peggy Noonan's help. He didn't have to persuade anyone of anything. He could have read names from a phone book and still retained the nation's admiration.

What helped get Bush where he was in early March was the well-equipped office he sat in. "As commander-in-chief," Bush said that night, "I can report to you: Our armed forces fought with honor and valor. As President, I can report to the nation: Aggression is defeated." It would have been impolitic, but Bush could have added: "And the presidency itself has been vindicated."

This was one of the major stories of the Persian Gulf War, but with few exceptions the media did not see it. To be sure, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*, among others, published detailed pieces recapping the Bush Administration's seven-month effort to oust Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. There were numerous profiles of Bush the War President, discussing his personal character and style of leadership, and there were, remarkably enough, editorials and op-eds saluting the President for his undeniable achievement, some written by people not known for toasting Bush unless with an intention to burn.

In all this coverage, I found only one news analysis that explicitly noted that one of the winners of the Gulf conflict was the presidency as an institution. Making this point, the *Economist* observed, "There will be fewer questions about the power of the commander-in-chief in the future, and less talk of the War Powers Act."

Terry Eastland is resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

As for opinion writers, only two understood the central importance of the presidential office—Charles Krauthammer and the *Wall Street Journal*'s L. Gordon Crovitz. Pointedly noting that Bush did not really use the bully pulpit, Krauthammer showed how the President employed the formal powers of office to rally "a reluctant nation to a successful war." Crovitz observed that Bush had used his powers to "outflank" Iraq, in the process recovering presidential dominance in foreign policy.

A press less ignorant about the presidency as an institution would have seen the exercise of executive power as the constant theme in the series of U.S. actions taken in the wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

First, there was the freezing of Kuwaiti assets to keep them out of Iraqi hands, then the drafting of the crucial first United Nations Security Council resolution—Number 660—which condemned the invasion and demanded Iraq's withdrawal. Then there was the diplomacy to get the Saudis to agree to a large-scale deployment of U.S. troops, followed by efforts to recruit Egypt, Morocco, and others into the alliance. Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf was sent to the Gulf, 230,000 troops in tow. There was more U.N. work, then a doubling of troops in early November. There was the diplomacy to get the U.N. resolution setting the January 15 deadline and authorizing the use of force. There was the legislative effort to get Congress to pass the resolution authorizing military action. Then, on January 16, there were the first bombs on Baghdad. When the Soviet Union tried to negotiate a peace on unsatisfactory terms, there was the delicate diplomatic effort to keep Mikhail Gorbachev at bay and the pressure on Saddam. When the latter refused to pull out, there was the ground war that forced the end.

On each of these occasions—whether dispatching diplomats or troops or bombs or bullets—the President took action pursuant to his formal powers. Only once did he propose to involve Congress—when he sought the resolution authorizing force—and even then he denied that its participation was necessary. Of course, Bush could have been thrown off course. Arab states could have refused to join the coalition at the outset or else seceded from it later on. The U.N. could have declined the role Bush sought for it. Gorbachev could have refused to butt out when Bush asked him to. For that matter, the actual war itself might not have gone so well. But, it was Bush who had the unique authority to do all of these things, not because of his rhetoric or his approval ratings but because of the Constitution.

The President is the commander-in-chief as well as the nation's chief diplomat, and he has the duty to take care that the laws are faithfully executed. In addition, he is vested with the executive power, which (to the consternation of many) eludes precise definition. It's all there in Article II of the Constitution.

It is, of course, important to point out that Bush *used* these powers. In his brilliant treatment of executive power, *Taming the Prince*, Harvard's Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. correctly emphasizes that the Constitution does not determine the behavior of those who govern under it. "Every president has to define the office for himself." Still, it matters that Bush was positioned by the office he held to do what he did. Congress could not have done what the President did; Congress and the President are co-equal in power, but their powers are *different*, a point the media seldom appreciate.

The legislative power is the genius of our government, but the framers of the Constitution realized that Congress could not be the source of energy in government, and that without energy there could be neither good administration nor effective foreign policy. The presidency was created to supply this energy. In its unity (the executive power is vested in one person) the President can act swiftly (freezing assets, sending troops) and diplomatically (in the Middle East, in the United Nations, in Moscow) and decisively (Colin Powell: "First we will cut it off; then we will kill it"). Imagine Congress, a body of 535, trying to do any of these things. It does other things (as George Mitchell might say: "First we will tax it; that should kill it"). The point is, Congress is institutionally ill-equipped to run foreign policy.

Not that it doesn't try, and, consistent with the trend since Vietnam, some members tried hard during Desert Shield. After Bush sent an additional 150,000 troops in November, some told the White House that only Congress could order such a large deployment, forgetting what Bush himself pointed out as he pulled a copy of the Constitution from his suit pocket. As uniquely reported by the presidential-power-savvy Gordon Crovitz, Bush told congress-

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men that under the Constitution only Congress can declare war, but only the President is commander-in-chief. Unable to get their way politically, some members of Congress sued, arguing that the congressional power to declare war meant that it had to give approval to what Bush had done; the judge in the case said the issue wasn't ripe (actually this banana had turned brown; the troops were already there). And up through the second week in January a sizable contingent in Congress continued to insist on staying with economic sanctions only; no military force, please.

In the end, of course, Congress passed the resolution authorizing military force. But contrary to what many in the media said at the time, that vote did not reveal a deliberative Congress so much as one that could not do otherwise. Congress had been outflanked by a President who had skillfully used his formal powers. Just as, in the end, Iraq was.

With few exceptions, the media remained unimpressed by this extraordinary triumph of presidential power or by its implications for the execution of American foreign policy. Indeed, readers of the news analyses of the *New York Times* were apt to take away a different message. On November 14, when congressional objection to the additional deployment was mounting, R. W. Apple, Jr. wrote that Bush was learning that limitations on presidential power apply in foreign policy as well as domestic affairs. After the war, neither Apple nor anyone else at the *Times* took the egg off the newspaper's face with the kind of analysis subsequent events demanded.

If the *Times* is an accurate barometer, the media have yet to figure out that kicking the Vietnam syndrome has required demonstration not only of American military might but also of a presidential might that puts Congress in its foreign policy place. The 1973 War Powers Act, which Bush technically violated by sending troops to Saudi Arabia without consulting Congress, is now virtually a dead letter.

Also dead, in an important respect, is the Democratic party. The media have provided plenty of stories on its postwar difficulties, given the position of most congressional Democrats against the use of force. But perhaps because of their own blindness to the nature and importance of executive power, the media have not penetrated to the deepest level of insight: the war revealed the Democratic party as not merely anti-war, but anti-executive. It is inherent in the very idea of the executive that at some point he must use force, given recalcitrant human nature. So consistently against force for more than three decades, and then so conspicuously against it when there was a clearly just war, the Democrats simply lack the mentality to be an executive party. Though unremarked by the media, this is as serious a problem as a political party can have. It is, at bottom, why the image of Michael Dukakis riding in a tank was so laughable in 1988—and is even more so today. The Democrats are a congressional party that would have been at home under the Articles of Confederation—when there was no presidency.

Dan Rather's remark about the power to persuade was not something that oddly popped from his mouth. It is axiomatic among most members of the media that the power to persuade really is the President's most important.

Two definitions of this power are currently in use. One is a mainly rhetorical definition: the President uses speeches to rally public opinion to his side. Ronald Reagan and his speechwriters helped popularize this understanding of the power to persuade, i.e., the rhetorical presidency. The other definition, more sophisticated, is drawn from Richard Neustadt's book *Presidential Power*, first published in 1960 and a bedside bible for most White House reporters. Neustadt argues that the President must acquire and use personal power in order to secure his formal powers of office; the latter are not central to his work, though they may be useful, in a subordinate way, to what he calls "the persuasive process."

These definitions imply an interest in the personal abilities of a President and also in approval ratings (on the theory that ratings indicate how a President has done at persuasion), even as they give short shrift to the formal powers of office—the very ones Bush used so skillfully from August 2 through February. The influence of these definitions among the media helps explain the complaint made unremittingly during the fall that Bush had not been a good enough communicator.

Consider the litany on this score by the *Washington Post*, when polls in November showed that less than a majority of Americans believed Bush had explained the situation well enough "so that you understand why troops are there." Jim Hoagland, the paper's chief foreign correspondent, wrote on November 4 that we had the right Gulf policy but "the wrong President" because Bush, who has "limitations" in speechmaking, had not made "a clear and ideally inspirational statement to the nation to explain the goals of the potentially bloody conflict we may be approaching." On November 15, the *Post* reminded its readers that Bush was no Great Communicator in a story headlined: "President Struggles to Ar-

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ticulate Goals." On December 2, another of the paper's correspondents, George Wilson, sang the same chorus: Bush was "still groping for a rallying cry to get teenagers and their parents to believe it is worth risking their lives to free Kuwait, save gulf oil or topple Saddam." Bush's rhetorical inability, it appeared, would do in his effort; he just didn't have the right stuff. Obviously, the power to persuade was the most important presidential power.

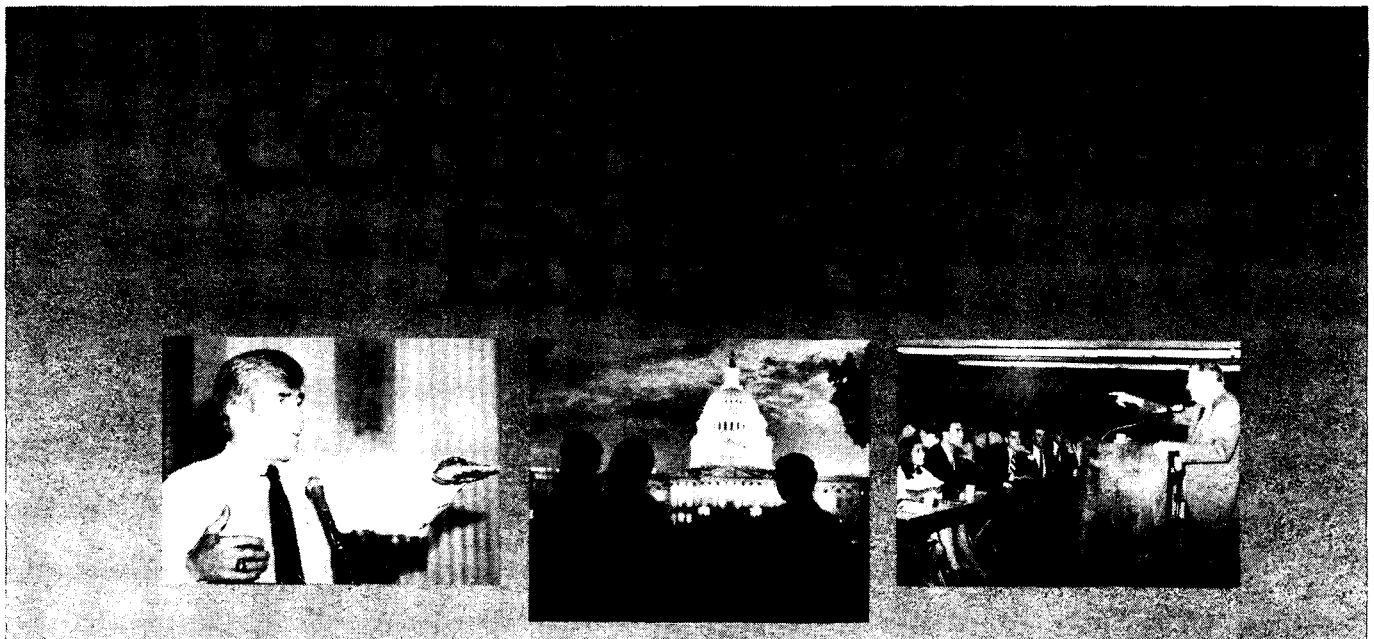
As it happened, of course, Bush turned out not to be the Great Communicator but the Great Liberator. It was not rhetoric impressive enough for the *Washington Post* that rallied Americans to Bush's side, and the United States to victory in the Gulf. Rather it was what he *did*. As Charles Krauthammer wrote, Bush took unilateral actions "that were bold and, to the extent anyone had considered them at all, generally unpopular at the time. Yet each action reshaped the debate and *in time came to be seen* [emphasis mine] as necessary if not inevitable—and correct." One example: Three days before he deployed the troops in August, the Gallup Poll reported that 56 percent of Americans opposed such a move; after he gave the order, 81 percent approved. A second example: Ten days before the ground war, the CBS/*New York Times* poll found just 11 percent of Americans in favor of starting one; the day after it was launched, some 75 percent approved. Krauthammer's conclusion: "As a shaper of public opinion, the bully pulpit is overrated. The powers of the presidency, if skillfully deployed, are enough to move the nation. . . . Government schools will be studying Bush's march through Washington." A fair question is whether a press that understands power in terms of speeches and approval ratings will do the same.

The *Economist*, in marvelous understatement, observed, "The press has not had a good war." One reason it did not is that its nature was revealed in a context for comparison in which it was bound to be the loser.

The military is a collective enterprise that represents the nation in a life-and-death struggle over important ends. "Duty, honor, country" capture its ideals. By contrast, the media, when they report a story, are not a collective enterprise but many individuals in competition; that is why, in Saudi Arabia, some news organizations resisted the "pool" system that collectivized the journalism from the front. What the media typically struggle over isn't life-and-death but the story itself. If reporters do risk their lives, it's typically for the sake of the story (Bob Simon), not for the nation that the military represents. The press has no analogue to duty, honor, country; it is not constrained by heroic ends. Of course, the media will argue that they represent the nation as proxies for the general public; but the proxies the people are more concerned about are the ones in uniform. That is why the public accepts censorship during a war, as it did in this one. It is also why the public is upset when the press complains about censorship, as it did in this one.

The media play a vital role in American democracy, but not the leading one, and seldom the heroic one. Such is the lot for those who are not doers, but observers. When General Schwarzkopf asked a reporter during his fifty-seven-minute Mother of All Briefings whether the man had ever been in a minefield (the answer was "no"), he in an instant revealed the difference between the military and the media—on worldwide television, no less.

Congress is not the only institution that has fallen a notch or two in the wake of a remarkable display of presidential power. For the first time since Vietnam and Watergate, the media suddenly find themselves less favored, if not less monied. For those who want to parse the complete meaning of kicking the Vietnam syndrome, there may be something here. □



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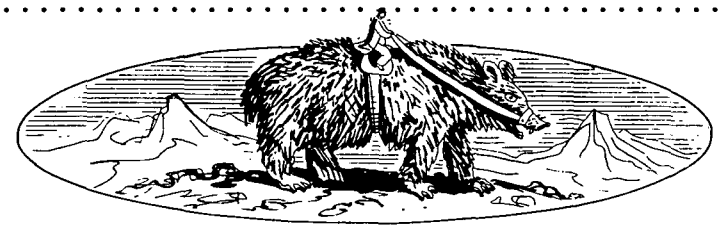

UPDATING THE POZNER FILE: AN INTERVIEW

by Cathy Young

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the bookstore, here comes, from Avon Books, a paperback of Vladimir Pozner's Parting with Illusions. *It has a new afterword that deals with events since the hardcover appeared last spring—events that prompted Pozner to join the great Soviet exodus from the Communist party.*

In his book and in the hourlong conversation we had in New York during his publicity tour, Pozner derided anti-Soviet American commentators such as Marshall Goldman and George Will for telling Americans what to think about him rather than letting them make up their minds. Of course, the whole point of being a writer is to tell people what to think, but why not make an occasional exception? So, here it is: she said, he said. As the Church Lady says on "Saturday Night Live," you be the judge:

Cathy Young: You're here to promote the paperback edition of your book?
Vladimir Pozner: Well, I came here on the 13th of February to do some public speaking for about two weeks and that was followed by the book tour which, indeed, coincides with the paperback edition of my book.
CY: Are you planning to publish a book in Russian?
VP: Yes indeed, the same book. The problem was that because there's a solid autobiographical flavor to it, and since my life began here, I thought I'd start writing it in English and then simply translate it—but [then] I realized that, first of all, there were many things that I had to explain to an American audience that I did not have to explain to a Soviet [one], and vice versa; and second, no matter how good a translation of any book, it always reads like a translation. So I understood I would have to rewrite it—not in the sense of changing anything but simply write it [in Russian] rather than translate it. I should be finished by the end of April, and I have three publishers who've asked for it in the Soviet Union. I'll probably give it to the publisher who brings it out the fastest.
CY: How often do you appear on [Soviet] TV?
VP: I do a [monthly] show of my own, a live 90-minute show which used to be called "Sunday Evening with Vladimir Pozner," but we moved it to Friday because Friday has a higher viewership. But I also do [various] specials. In short, I usually appear about three times a month, and I like to keep that the limit.
CY: There was a poll about a year ago that placed you among the five most popular TV personalities in the Soviet Union . . .
VP: Actually, there was a poll a year ago that made me number one, but it really depends on how you conduct the poll. I would say, probably, the top three is where I am, which is very—you know, it soothes my ego.
CY: Would you say that you're better known to American or Soviet television viewers?
VP: It's hard to say. I guess I'm very widely known in both countries, which really puts me in a kind of unique situation. Not only am I well known, but people seem to like me. It's very gratifying to see that the work you've done is appreciated in two countries.
CY: What's happening with Soviet television today?
VP: [There] is an attempt on the part of the government to hold on to what is probably the most powerful and the most effective of all the media. [Television is] different from the printed press, which is no longer controlled by the party or by the government; both of them do have their newspapers and magazines, but there are many [others] that are not controlled and afford very different views. Television has always been government- or, in reality, party-controlled, and that's the way President Gorbachev would like to see it. His most recent appointee, Leonid Kravchenko [the head of the state broadcasting company], came in with the statement that he was the president's man and he would see to it that the president's policies were well represented and defended on television. The good thing is that [TV stations in the republics] are now independent; Moscow does not have a hold on them. Clearly, today, Soviet Central TV is politically slanted towards Gorbachev, and it does not really afford much time for a view that might be considered anti-Gorbachev, which is why Yeltsin had such a problem getting on. In the absence of any other *national* television that can compete, this gives the government a very unfair advantage.
CY: Do you expect this to affect your freedom to say what you want in your broadcasts?
VP: It's an interesting question because up until now, I have enjoyed, I think, about as much freedom as any person can ever hope to enjoy: I choose the subjects of my shows, they are live, and people can say what they want—and they say some pretty strong things. And yet thus far I have not experienced any pressure. I've wondered why. I think *maybe* the main reason is that what I attempt to do in my programs is constructive; I will go for whatever issues are important, [but] what I do not try to do is simply tear down everything and not propose some alternative. What I try to do is get dialogue going and look for solutions, rather than simply say, everything is bad, everything is hopeless. Maybe that's one reason I have been able to function the way I have. However, I tend to think that this might change as things get tighter.
CY: In the aftermath of the events in Vilnius, there were several open letters and appeals by journalists and intellectuals denouncing the attempts to suppress glasnost. Have you signed any of those?
VP: No, I have not. A letter was published in *Moscow News* under the heading of "a criminal government wishing to stay in power." The letter was not sent to me, but even if it had been, I don't think I would have signed it. I don't believe in those kinds of inflammatory statements. What a journalist should do is simply provide the information or, if he's a commentator, express his views, which I have definitely done—but signing petitions and letters is something I would not do as a journalist, as a matter of principle.
CY: On your show, have you dealt with the Lithuanian issue?
VP: In my last show that I did before coming here, I had 120 children aged 10 to 17 from all over the Soviet Union but basically the hot spots—the Baltics, the Transcaucasian region, Central Asia, and so on—and they talked about the nationalities issue, whether or not to have a union, how they felt about Gorbachev; one girl from Vilnius had

Cathy Young is the author of Growing Up in Moscow *(Ticknor & Fields).*

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[brought] a toy tank with her which she, on the program, presented to Marshal [Dmitri] Yazov from the children of Vilnius. I think there's no doubt in anyone's mind as to what I think about what happened in Vilnius, and I've been very, very outspoken in [my view] that the republics *must* get their independence.

CY: Would you have Yeltsin as a guest on your show?

VP: He was supposed to be on my show just before the New Year. However, he had to go out to the Far North [to meet with the coal miners], and he pulled out about five days before the show, which put me in a difficult position. Although I very much support Yeltsin, I kind of got angry at him. We met two weeks later and he [explained why he had to go]. So we have a good relationship and I suspect I might have him on; but I'd have to have him on for a good reason —I mean, I need a subject to talk about. For anyone to tell me that I can't invite Yeltsin is looking for trouble because I'd make this public immediately. Yeltsin is not a criminal or [a convict]; he happens to head the Russian Federation.

CY: There were attempts to set up a Russian Republic television . . .

VP: That is happening. See, every republic has its television, has always had it on the local level, [except for] the Russian Republic. Originally, the way it was supposed to be was that national Channel 2 would be given to the Russian Federation to use. Yeltsin says [that] this is what Gorbachev promised him on more than one occasion. However, he did not do it in writing. And now, as I understand, they don't want to give Yeltsin Channel 2. Beginning March 31, Russia will have six hours of its own a day on Channel 2; a couple of hours in the morning, a couple of hours in the early evening, and a couple of hours after the evening news. But by next September, they hope to have enough of their own high-tech equipment to create a channel of their own. So Russia will have a broadcast facility, no doubt about it.

CY: Wasn't there a motion [at last February's convention of Soviet journalists] to expel Kravchenko from the Journalists' Union?

VP: That was not accepted. But, actually, I do not think it would be right to expel the man. If the Union of Soviet Journalists is a professional union of journalists, he absolutely qualifies as [one]. If all it takes to be a member of the union is to be a bona fide professional journalist, I don't see how you could possibly exclude Kravchenko. On what grounds?

CY: You have said that if there were a real attempt to revert to the old-style dictatorship, you would do your utmost to fight that. How far do you see yourself going in that direction?

VP: As far as need be. I think that has a lot to do with where you stand in the sense of your own fears. And I say this with all due modesty, but I know that I have been able to overcome that. So if that were to happen, I would fight it in any way I could. If I were taken off the air, then I would go to the press, I'd do public speaking, I'd do press conferences. What else can you do?

CY: What if it was a question of going to jail?

VP: Absolutely. If that had to happen, it would have to happen.

CY: In the past, you say you rationalized to yourself certain things you said but never said anything you didn't believe.

VP: When you have profound belief in whatever it may be, you protect that belief because it's what makes you live, it's what gives you your drive and your security and so on; and if something challenges it, what I would do and what I think most people would do is find a rationale to explain this challenge away. And that's what I did for many, many years. I know that when I was working for Radio Moscow on the North American service, [in] the little three-minute reports that I did—"Vladimir Pozner's Daily Talk"—I always picked things that

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I felt comfortable with. Of course I picked positive things, and my rationale was very clear: Look, in America, all they ever do is talk negative about the Soviet Union; so let my little voice sound in this chorus of negativism with something positive.

CY: It seems to me that a lot of what was said about the Soviet Union here was not nearly as negative as some of the things that are being said now in the Soviet Union about the Soviet past.

VP: Yes, I agree with you. It's not even that they weren't as negative; they were different, they were very superficial. There was a time when the only thing you heard about on American television and in the newspapers concerning the Soviet Union was dissidents, and it was dissidents this and dissidents that—and gradually people began to think that in the Soviet Union everyone was a dissident or at least there was a whole lot of them. In reality, the dissidents were one-tenth of one percent, maybe. But the way it was reported blew it up into this major thing. This is just one example. And there was never anything good in the Soviet Union—whereas in fact, there were some wonderful things.

CY: Such as—?

VP: Well, I happen to believe that a country that was 77 percent illiterate only seventy years ago and became a literate country did a pretty wonderful job. Now in this country, it's "Oh, Soviet education is so wonderful"—which it isn't, for a different reason, because while it taught people how to read and write, it was not aimed at helping people think independently. I happen to think that, initially, guaranteed work was a wonderful [thing] and it was wonderful that it was included in the constitution, [though] many things went wrong. The guaranteed right to a roof over your head and to free medical care—these are very important rights. According to statistics I read, 30 percent of all the people who are ill in this country never go to see a doctor because they're afraid the bill's going to be too high. This is not human, in my opinion. And I'm not defending the Soviet Union when I say that. What I'm saying is that it was never a balanced view. And since I was very pro-Soviet and very much a patriot, I defended my country. But I always said only what I believed in—although, of course *[smiles]*, I did *not* say some of the things I believed in.

CY: The revelations in the Soviet press over the past few years about the state of medical care, the homelessness, the poverty—did you know any of that before?

VP: I would have bet everything I had on there not being any homeless people in the Soviet Union. I mean, I had traveled all over the Soviet Union; I never saw anyone sleeping on a street or on a park bench. Or jobless people; I never heard of that. And I think it was true [at one time]. I think the situation began to deteriorate seriously towards the end of the Brezhnev period. But I *still* think that a society should provide some kind of safety net. And when [you] see a rich society like this one [and] you see misery and poverty almost like in Bombay—there's something wrong with this kind of society. Of course, [as for] Soviet society, it just fell apart, because it was pretending to be one thing and in reality it was something else.

CY: I had the feeling, reading your book, that some of your comments were rather behind the pace of political evolution in the Soviet Union. When you said that the dissidents were playing into the hands of foreign anti-Soviet propaganda—

VP: I still say so.

CY: My impression, though, is that today, in the Soviet press, there is tremendous respect for these people.

VP: I know there is. I know, absolutely. But I have to tell you—

CY: Do you think they're wrong about that?

VP: Everyone is entitled to his opinion. But my view has always been—if I have to fight, I'm not going to call on the United States or anyone else. There's something inside me that says, you just don't do that. And more importantly, the [governments] of Western countries, the United States included—I don't think they actually cared about human rights in the Soviet Union. When human rights are trampled in friendly countries, [or even in China], the United States doesn't react. Average people care; they get the news and they react, but the policymakers—they're playing politics. They're using you for a political purpose. I *still* say that. I will not allow myself to be used by these people. I respect, to a certain extent, the people who were very courageous, who risked their lives sometimes—but I don't agree with them.

CY: Was there any other way for them to go about it at the time than appeal to the West?

VP: Let me say one thing. I don't want to judge these people because they had the courage to risk some very serious threats, which I did not do. I simply say that I'm [personally] uncomfortable when a person in one country, I don't care what country, appeals to another country [and] allows himself or herself to be used by the politicians in that other country who don't really care about this. But I don't wish this to be understood as a holier-than-thou kind of statement.

CY: Do you think *they* have the right to judge *you* for not speaking out [as Vladimir Bukovsky did in his review of your book in the *New Republic*]?

VP: Everyone has the right to do whatever they want, to think what they want. [When I saw the Bukovsky review,] I laughed at what he wrote, because it was so obviously biased. It wasn't about the book; it was a personal attack on me. Many things were not true. [Thus] I write that in 1967 when I was 32 years old, I joined the Communist party, and the main reason I joined was the feeling that the more good people join the party the better it will be, and if we wanted to change something it had to be through the party. Bukovsky says that in 1967, nobody thought that way. That's not true. [But] I would be amazed if Bukovsky showed a somewhat more subtle, more flexible view of things. I have been attacked by the right wing in this country, by the right wing in the Soviet Union, by people I consider to be hardliners—and, in a way, Bukovsky is a hardliner. He is not a democrat or a liberal, in my opinion. I have to say that I'm proud of the kind of people who have attacked me—George Will, Pat Buchanan. I [also] had very negative reviews in the *Boston Globe*, in the *New York Times*, in the *Los Angeles Times*; I was attacked by a great many critics—and *I* was attacked, it wasn't the book. They didn't talk about the book. And yet [it] was a bestseller for eleven weeks.

CY: What do you think explains that?

VP: I think that maybe it's because people had seen me, watched me. Maybe it's that people have enough common sense. Of course, they say there is no bad publicity except the obituary. Maybe it's that the attacks were so personal, you could feel that these people really disliked me. And I've always wondered why they disliked me. I didn't defend the Soviet Union more than other people did; I know people who did much more—officials like Arbatov. I think the reason is that they know that I was honest [and] that I was effective because I could say things in a way that Americans could relate to, and I guess that made me especially unpleasant, suspicious, whatever.

CY: You say in your book that the idea of socialism with a human face would, in fact, be more threatening to [the powers that be] than [the existing Soviet model] . . .

VP: Of course it would.

CY: If that is the case, why aren't there a lot of attacks on Sweden?

VP: Because Sweden is not socialist; it's a social democracy. The basic question is, who owns the property? In Sweden, you have a high degree of social democracy, social security, and all of that. But private ownership is the backbone, as it is with all Scandinavian countries. The real [reason] why socialism is so feared and so many in the West hated it was because it took away property; that was the idea of the Revolution. I'm not saying it's a good idea or a bad idea; I'm simply saying that's what it was about. Socialism with a human face as depicted by Marx and so on is something to be very feared, because if it could do what socialism promised, which is to say, guarantee people real security and at the same time all the freedoms . . .

CY: Can it do that?

VP: I don't know if socialism can even work; but that's what they were talking about when they spoke about socialism with a human face, and my view is that [the Western powers that be] were saying, heaven forbid, because if you could go to the man in the street and say, here's a system that guarantees you a job [and] everything else and at the same time all the freedoms, he's going to say, "Now wait a minute, maybe we should have that."

CY: One last question. If things in the Soviet Union were to take a drastic turn for the worse, toward dictatorship, would you ever consider emigrating to the United States?

VP: My own belief is that the only time it is morally permissible to emigrate is if you are kicked out of your own country. If that were to happen to me, I don't know if I would go to the United States or somewhere else. Otherwise, I would stay and I would fight.

Oh, what the hell. I'll tell you what to think, or at least what I *think. First, where did Pozner find those American newspapers and TV stations that were so overwhelmingly negative about the Soviet Union? I wish I'd known about them at the time. But no, I had to keep running into the ones that always pointed out, for the sake of balance, how the Soviet state guaranteed its citizens free medical care, a roof over one's head, and equal rights for women, and how most people were basically satisfied with the system. And second, would Pozner really fight the restoration of dictatorship? I'm afraid there's only one way to find out, and it's too high a price to pay.* □

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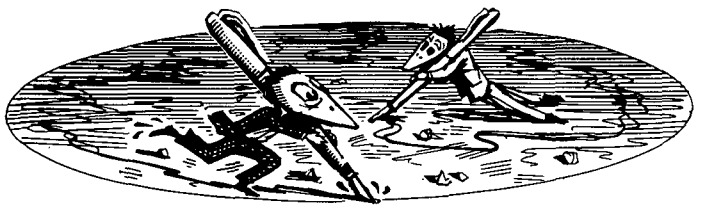


STAGE LEFT

by Joe Queenan

As the curtain rose on Steve Tesich's new play *The Speed of Darkness*, I found myself gazing at an ordinary living room in an ordinary American household headed by an ordinary Mom and Dad who were raising an ordinary seventeen-year-old girl named Mary in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Something inside me set off an alarm that before the afternoon was half-over I would revile these characters to the very core of my being. Something inside me warned that beneath this veneer of normality lay buried a secret so horrid, so vile, so pernicious that I would come away shaken to the core of my being, loathing a society that masks unspeakable depravity beneath a thin gauze of bourgeois decorum. Something inside me warned that before I staggered out of the theater that afternoon, I would have been exposed to prostitution, financial corruption, the illegal dumping of toxic waste, the rape of the environment, and that great-granddaddy of emotionally overpowering stage devices: the messy suicide.

What I hadn't counted on were such bonus attractions as vindictive bag people, deranged Vietnam veterans, explosive alcoholic rages, and, yes, even a teenaged boy having his private parts tugged on by a supposed pillar of the community. Tesich, best known for *Breaking Away*, perhaps the finest account of Indiana high school bicyclists in motion-picture history, gives the thoughtful their money's worth. Lacing into Middle America the way only people who earn their living in either New York or Los Angeles can, Tesich has produced a real fire-and-brimstone number here, making the theatergoer wonder just what the hell is going on out there in South Dakota, and why the rest of us leading quiet lives of middle-class desperation in Any Town, USA, haven't heard about it up until now. Cancel *my* summer excursion to Sioux Falls.

The Speed of Darkness, recipient of an incredibly enthusiastic review from the normally truculent Frank Rich of the *New York Times* (followed by two only slightly less rapturous paeans by Rich's colleagues), is an early favorite for this year's Tony for Most Politically Correct Play That Is Neither an Arthur Miller Revival nor Written by David Rabe. By the time it's over, we have learned that Joe (played by Len Cariou, who does not talk like someone from South Dakota) is not the upstanding business leader he seems to be, but a man who once dumped toxic waste all over the site of a pristine area now to be developed into luxury housing; that his wife (played by Lisa Eichhorn, who does not talk like someone from South Dakota) is not a ladylike goody-two-shoes but a rehabilitated tramp who's slept with everyone in town; and that poor, little Mary (played by Kathryn Erbe, who doesn't talk like someone from South Dakota) is not Joe's true offspring, and could have been sired by any one of dozens of men in the greater metropolitan area. *Shazam*!

Early in the play, Joe, a Vietnam War Hero and Successful Home Builder, learns that he is a finalist for the South Dakota Man of the Year Award. That's the kind of honor that many upstanding people from more populous states never really get a crack at (if only I lived in Rhode Island instead of New York, I might have a 50-50 shot at it myself), and we instinctively feel empathy for a man who appears to be a stand-up guy.

Alas, this happy household is soon thrust into a maelstrom of emotional discombobulation when Lou—one of Joe's old Vietnam buddies who is now an astonishingly articulate bag person—resurfaces and tears the facade off this stereotypical American family. By the time he's finished his fifteenth trenchant soliloquy, we're convinced that Joe is an Enemy of the People, a Despoiler of Nature, a Beater of Women, a Betrayer of His Children and Their Children and the Children of Their Children, and, I believe, A Recovering Alcoholic, though he may just be a Drunk. In short, not South Dakota Man of the Year material.

Tesich is a facile writer, giving such great lines to the Bag Veteran and the incredibly sage Boy Next Door (Mary's dweebish boyfriend, played by Robert Sean Leonard, who does not talk like someone from South Dakota) that the unsophisticated theatergoer, or even the chief drama critic for the *New York Times*, might not notice right off the bat how incredibly ridiculous this play is. Consider Joe's comment about journalists who want to know what it was like to fight in Vietnam: "That's the worst kind of greed: the greed to get from me for nothing what it cost me plenty to learn." That's a nice line, but it doesn't sound like something a Sioux Falls home builder would say; it sounds like something you'd hear from a screenplay writer.

An even better example of Tesich's ventriloquism is the remarkable speech about the shortcomings of contemporary public sculpture that Lou, the itinerant bag person, delivers near the end of Act I:

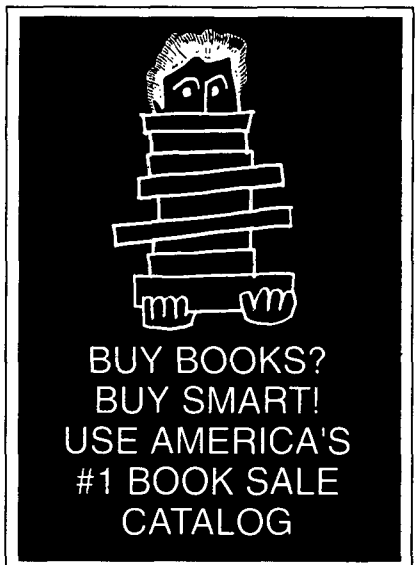
> It's a curious thing about the homeless—bums. Most of us, I would say ninety-nine percent of us homeless—bums—or at least ninety-nine percent of the homeless bums I have encountered, are very conservative when it comes to urban art. For example, there's the world's biggest Picasso in Chicago, but the last time I passed through there, there wasn't one bum sleeping under it—or near it, or even in the vicinity of it. The same is true for all the other modern art pieces, I believe they're called, in all the other cities I've been living in. And yet, the traditional statues in those great cities—General Grant, Giuseppe Verdi, Simon Bolivar—are quite crowded all over with assorted homeless bums. . . . Pigeons, I've noticed, also seem to prefer the traditional over the modern. The only exception to this whole theory is Henry Moore. Both the birds and the bums seem to feel at home with Henry Moore.

He then theorizes that it is not the artwork that matters, but the identifying plaque, which is frequently absent from modern artworks, but always present on statues of Bolivar. "It's not much, you know," says Lou, "but it's nice to have a little reading material before bedtime."

This is funny stuff, but it's not the sort of stuff one would, or should, expect to come dancing off the lips of a Vietnam-vet-turned-bag-person who has been living in the streets for the past decade. It's the sort of stuff one expects from a non-Vietnam veteran who's been living like a screenplay writer. It's the sort of wise-ass jive that makes a nomadic sociopath sound like a Greek chorus. Which is roughly par for the course in the contemporary theater.

Structurally, *The Speed of Darkness* follows the exact same format as the last really stupid play I'd seen, a George C. Scott/John Cullum vehicle of a few years back that portrayed Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer as old men (that is, senior citizens), with the ir-

Joe Queenan is a frequent contributor to Barron's *and other publications.*



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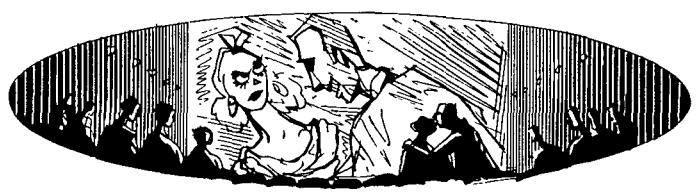
repressible Tom Sawyer in trouble with the authorities because of a child-abuse charge. That structure is: Start off normally, crack a lot of jokes, then round toward the end of Act I, work toward the Dark, Dark Secret. Then, in Act II, let all hell break loose.

Tesich's work features another staple of Truly Bad Plays: the on-stage suicide, this time with the bag person going down for the count. Personally, I was sorry to see him go, because bag people, even in their worst moments, are always more entertaining than people in the construction business. As played by Stephen Lang, whom we can forgive for not talking like someone from South Dakota, the character of Lou brought a refreshing aura of deranged zest to the proceedings, and I for one can't wait till Martin Sheen reprises the role in the not-yet-scheduled movie version of the play.

The Speed of Darkness was performed at the Belasco Theater, one of three Broadway playhouses that is experimenting with drastically reduced ticket prices in an effort to lure intelligent audiences to "serious drama." Speaking as an occasional theatergoer who found *Cats* a dog, *Les Miserables* miserable, and who doesn't enjoy plays that involve roller skates, men who dress like women, or men who dress like women on roller skates, I find this undertaking altogether commendable. Nevertheless, Tesich's play is merely an Old Testament rant that fuses clever but implausible dialogue with continuous pressure on all the modish sociocultural hot buttons. Even at $14.00 (plus $1.50 handling charge) it is overpriced. It should speedily be cast out into the darkness. □

THE TALKIES



SWINGING NO MORE

by James Bowman

Several new movies suggest that the sixties revival in pop culture is gathering steam. For the most part, however, it is not the real sixties that are being revived but a horribly tidied-up and earnest version that may be worse than the original. Some of us who had to get through the decade the first time around feel particularly aggrieved that there is now once again money—if not art—to be made out of peace and love and flower children. What will certainly be remembered as one of history's more spectacular dead ends is briefly looking to the jaded children of the Reagan era like a Golden Age. It wasn't.

Of the re-creations currently on offer, the best is Chuck Workman's documentary, *Superstar*, on the life of Andy Warhol. Whatever you may think of Warhol as an artist, there can be no doubt that he was a cultural entrepreneur of genius, the prototype as well as the inventor of the modern celebrity who is famous for being famous. As the novelist Fran Lebowitz says in one of many fascinating interviews in this picture, he made fame more famous; since Andy, there are a lot more celebrities around.

Above all, Warhol personified the essential ambiguity of the period. He was the hippest of the hip, but his own values were fundamentally those of his immigrant peasant family back in Pittsburgh. One of his splendidly down-to-earth cousins, interviewed by Workman, says that "when we read some of his philosophy we laughed out loud—we didn't know he was so much like us." His brother, Paul Warhola, even tells the camera that Campbell's soup was the children's favorite when they were growing up. The Warhol fascination with commercial kitsch now seems to stand, as Tom Wolfe observes, for the desire of sixties children to have it both ways: "to take advantage of the indulgences of modern life but to show you are superior to it because you are mocking it."

At least Warhol himself made no bones about it. When he told one of his teachers he wanted to be a great artist, the teacher replied: "What do you love most in the world?" The answer was "Money." And when the teacher said, "Paint it," Andy did. There was a wild integrity in his refusal to be pretentious about his art, and Workman's film begins with his insistence that we "just look at the surface. . . . There's nothing behind it." Paradoxically, it is his disavowal of any more permanent significance to his artifacts that has made him the one sixties figure who still looks interesting in the nineties.

At the opposite extreme is the ludicrously pretentious Jim Morrison, poet and shaman, who drank himself to death in 1971 at the age of 27 and who is the hero of Oliver Stone's paean *The Doors*. Who watches this rubbish? Aging hippies on a nostalgia trip, sure, but there can't be enough of them to make the film the hit it has been. Add in those who have a morbid fascination for ostentatious self-destruction (on one level the film is an invitation to us to cry, "Jump, Jim, jump!"), and you are left with a substantial body of cinema-goers who, like Stone, really believe that Morrison was a cool guy who did acid with God. I guess there's no error so gross that it doesn't have to be scotched more than once.

Too bad that only experience can teach us that Morrisonian narcissism ("Look at yourself; fall in love with yourself") is a pretty poor stab at the "something sacred" that he imagined his fans wanted. It would be more accurate to say that what they really wanted was sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, but that middle-class guilt made them also want to believe that *that* was sacred. It isn't. Like all successful entertainers, Morrison knew his audience, who were the same people as those who saw in Andy Warhol's work a way to make self-indulgence look like art.

What they wanted from Jim, and what he gave them, were bad-boy gyrations, naughty words, portentously obscure poetry, drug mysticism, a few Indian dances, and a dash of Satanism. All of this seemed to add up to Deep Meaning—so deep, in fact, as to be quite unfathomable. But its mystique was enough to persuade those who were themselves content with a little recreational marijuana and sex that they were embarked on something holy; they just hadn't progressed quite as far as St. Jim.

Yet it would be wrong to suggest that Morrison was just a cynical manipulator of his audience. To be as successful as he was he had to be stupid enough to believe in it himself. Insofar as there is any merit to Stone's portrait, it comes at the odd moment when he rises above that stupidity with a touch of almost whimsical irony. "Some say I'm the Lizard King," he intones—and then adds, "whatever that means." Although he is "interested in chaos and disorder," there is a moment when he can say, "I feel the universe functioning perfectly but I'm still locked inside myself." Above all, he knew that "they don't want me, they want my death." If not a shaman, he was at least a circus performer, one whose trick was to "kiss the snake on the tongue." But people come to watch that kind of thing because they hope that this time they will get to watch the snake kill him, as eventually it did.

Well, that's the price you pay for being a "God of Rock"; no guts, no glory. But it makes me feel dirty to assist in this voyeuristic exercise. I don't mind Jim's having fun, but I do mind Stone's attempt to convince us that he was a hero for doing it. The question of more general interest that he is getting at is this: What survives of the sixties today? Another film that attempts to answer this question is Michael Apted's *Class Action*, in which Gene Hackman and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio attempt to bring the Generation Gap (remember that?) up to date. Now it is the papa who is the flower child and the daughter who is the hard-nosed, success-oriented eighties type. Guess what happens. Yup, the greening of greed and the consternation of conservatism.

You know it has to happen this way when, in the opening scene, father-lawyer and daughter-lawyer are summing up in adjoining courtrooms: father elicits cheers from the gallery for his emotional defense of a worker who sabotaged some environmental "hellhole of a factory" as daughter is saying to the approval of a few smug yuppies that appeals to emotion have no place in a court of law. She's supposed to be a *good* lawyer, by the way. Those

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who are a little slower to pick up the direction in which things are headed can tell it by the fact that daughter-lawyer drives an Alfa Romeo Spider instead of a BMW. As the doctor said of the woman who gave birth after a 12-month pregnancy, we always knew she had it in her.

This is not a subtle film: papa has a framed photograph of George McGovern on his wall, daughter has framed blow-ups of Boardwalk and Park Place "Monopoly" cards. Papa is bringing a class-action suit against a car manufacturer on behalf of a bunch of accident victims who claim that a design fault led to their cars' blowing up after rear-end collisions. Of course the wicked corporation is guilty (having rather implausibly concluded that settling 150 lawsuits would be cheaper than fixing several thousand tail-light circuits) and indulges in a cover-up of evidence and—but you know the rest. Daddy's girl realizes she is working for sharks and breaks on through to the other side (J. Morrison).

It is interesting, however, that the one aspect of the sixties that is *not* celebrated in this film is sexual freedom. The daughter's estrangement from the father stems from his history of extramarital affairs and the effect that they have had on her and her mother. Her subsequent rebellion is what lands her in the beginning on the side of what the old man calls "fascist Reagan judges" and "the vilest kind of corporate vermin." The old man has to repent of his libidinous excesses before his little girl can come back to him, but otherwise the spirit of the sixties lives on.

It is true that there is a brief attempt to portray him as greedy for fame as the people's champion, but it doesn't come off: we know that, even though he can be at times the "superior, self-righteous bastard" that his wife calls him at one point, he is on the right side—just as the saintly wife is when she stops her daughter from eating grape jelly, in solidarity with the farm workers. When papa is depressed, he says that he thinks he should have died when Nixon resigned (maybe even before, we mutter); but the picture vindicates him. Its message is that the world still needs its sixties liberals.

What a horrible thought! Can it be that all that is left of the big sixties party is a pack of prigs and moralists? Steve Martin's *L.A. Story* is at least able to find cultural rather than political relics of the sixties to do reverence (and irreverence) to. As a satire on California life it is too predictable, if intermittently funny, but what is striking about it is the kind of sixties wackiness that it lovingly re-creates. There are even Richard Lester–style camera tricks—time lapse and slow-motion photography—and appearances by such classic sixties types as George Plimpton and Peter Cook to help establish the film's antecedents in that era. Here British screwball comedy seems born again with the girlfriend (Victoria Tennant), who plays that great anthem of sixties mindlessness, Manfred Mann's "Doo Wah Diddy," on the tuba.

To Martin, the sixties live on in contemporary California spaciness, and who are we to gainsay him? The satire on sexual and restaurant manners, cosmetic surgery, health nuts and gadget nuts, freeway maniacs, performance art and performance life (even TV weathermen have agents), is of the gentlest. Here is a man who loves it all. And his exercises in mystification (he gets advice from an electronic freeway sign and makes the weather subordinate to love's imperatives) have more than a little of seriousness about them. As his two lovers walk through a garden (including stone lions) which comes to animate life and magically revert to childhood to the strains of New Age music, we realize that Steve Martin is a man who will never get over the sixties.

To him that decade's permanent legacy is the kind of crazy individualism of which California is the paradise; here, says his British visitor, "no one is looking to the outside for confirmation that what they're doing is all right." This seems to me to be all wrong. On the film's own showing, California people are at least as concerned as the rest of the human race with looking good and winning the approval of others; it is just that, there, a certain amount of superficial eccentricity—like that of the girl (marvelously portrayed by Sarah Jessica Parker) who spells her name SanDeE*—seems to be the way to do it. Martin, like most non-Californians, finds this silly; but Martin, unlike most non-Californians, likes silly things. As that quintessential California boy Jim Morrison used to say: "Will to be Weird."

Different perspectives on the subject of Californian manners are to be found in three other recent releases: John Badham's *The Hard Way*, with Michael J. Fox and James Woods; Paul Mazursky's *Scenes from a Mall*, with Woody Allen and Bette Midler; and Henry Jaglom's *Eating* ("A very serious comedy about women and food"). *The Hard Way* begins by taking the New York streets as the reality from which Hollywood is insulated in order to produce a culture-clash comedy. A pampered movie star (Fox) attempts to pick up a little local color for a movie role by becoming the buddy of a hard-as-nails cop (Woods). I leave it to you to decide if it is funny to discover, in the end, that New York reality looks exactly like a Steven Spielberg extravaganza.

Scenes from a Mall I enjoyed very much. Here, too, California is a metaphor for the way we live now, but instead of Martin's emphasis on dippiness, Mazursky concentrates on the blandness of the culture of the suburban shopping mall. This in itself would be unremarkable but for the fact that that culture is seen as beneficent rather than sinister. Allen and Midler portray a married couple trapped in a mall just as they find their marriage on the point of breaking up. But the material richness of their surroundings serves as a soothing and healing influence to lead them back into the money-padded comfort of an unexciting but essentially happy bourgeois conjugality.

Here, perhaps, is the Andy Warhol generation finally liberated from the need to pretend that its fascination with consumerism has anything transcendent about it. Artistic pretentiousness, in the person of a pesky mime (Bill Irwin) who could have stepped straight out of sixties street theatre, is slugged in the jaw—and then, weirdly, given $100 to keep his mouth shut. Life as a consumer is good and it is wholesome, but, as Woody Allen says at the beginning, having reproduced and brought up the (now materially demanding) kids, he and his wife have nothing further to look forward to but death. The intervening time will be comfortably spent, but after a brief moment of crisis they seem to conclude, like Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot*, that there is nothing else for them but to go on as they are.

In *Eating*, Henry Jaglom is both more and less inclined to yield to this comfortable despair. Like Steve Martin, he makes use of a number of stock features of the cinematic portrayal of California

life: tarot cards and crystals, foam cones for primally screaming into and foam baseball bats for working off aggression with. But here they are not meant to be funny so much as faddish, reminders of the tyranny of fashion under which a group of some forty supposedly liberated women live. Nor are material comforts the source of emotional solace as they are for Mazursky; instead they undermine the very happiness they are supposed to produce.

For Jaglom the sixties have not survived in individualism but in a kind of desperate conformity; the sexual liberation they brought has mutated into a new kind of oppressiveness. For the corollary of sexual freedom was the necessity to remain sexually attractive—i.e., thin and young-looking. "Twenty-five years ago," says one of his characters, "the secret subject of women was sex; today it's food." But food here is really only the most prominent symbol of all the pleasures available to them, the indulgence of which only increases their sense of insecurity.

The state of constant anxiety in which these women live their lives produces a dark and pessimistic vision of the late twentieth-century world. When one of his women says that sometimes she feels "there is a big black hole inside of me that nothing could ever fill," she is talking about an emptiness that is spiritual as well as alimentary and sexual. Nathanael West would recognize this version of California, although to me Jaglom's serious points are a little too heavy for the material he has to hang them on. What I think, finally, makes the film a success is the presence of the central character's mother, played by Frances Bergen, whose puzzlement in the midst of all these unhappy children of the sixties serves as the voice of the pre-sixties past.

It is a voice of moderation and modesty, of self-restraint and common sense, and it is, in the terms of this film, quite isolated and impotent. Maybe, as Jim Morrison says, "our pure reason hides the infinite from us"—a thought no more original to him than most of his *oeuvre* was—but these are people who have more than they can handle from the *finite* and have need of a little reason. How is it that they, like the rest of us to some extent and in ways we cannot help, are still in thrall to the Morrisonian mysticism of liberation? Liberation from what? From the relative sanity, it turns out, of the bad old days before the sixties—to which no filmmaker, to my knowledge, thinks we can ever go back. I suppose that's enough of a reason to go on scrutinizing the decade when everything changed; I just wish it were as much fun the second time around. □

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BOOK REVIEWS

OPENING ARGUMENTS: A YOUNG LAWYER'S FIRST CASE: UNITED STATES v. OLIVER NORTH

Jeffrey Toobin/Viking/374 pp. $22.95

Michael Ledeen

It's hard to write a boring book about the Iran-contra affair and, while Jeffrey Toobin hasn't fully succeeded, this is as close as anyone is likely to get. Toobin came to Washington with Judge Lawrence Walsh to prosecute the Reagan Administration. He and many of his colleagues saw themselves as avenging angels who would do to Reagan what Jaworski, Ben Veniste et al. had done to Nixon. But it didn't happen that way, and the great purification produced only a handful of convictions against North and Poindexter: shredding documents before Congress could read them, preparing a phony chronology of the Iran initiative for Congress, accepting a security fence without paying for it, and lying to Congress. Indeed, it was even feebler than that, since on one count North was convicted only of "aiding and abetting" the production of the false chronology. Toobin exults in the convictions:

> [North] wrote a false chronology for Congress; he lied. He shredded important documents before others could see them; he cheated. He took a valuable home improvement to which he was not entitled; he stole.

These convictions—subsequently overturned on appeal—provide the justification for the vast Walsh enterprise, with its unlimited resources, its pharaonic facilities in some of the most expensive digs in Washington, and its enormous staff. It is difficult to estimate just how much has been spent by the Office of the Independent Counsel (OIC), but it is reportedly well in excess of $35 million. Oddly, Toobin tells us quite a bit about the early days, when the OIC worked out of cramped quarters, but nothing about the super-elegant facilities it has occupied for most of its existence. In fact, if I didn't know better, I'd swear that Toobin had somehow been dragooned by a phantasmagorical group pretending to be the OIC. (I hasten to add that I had nothing but respectful and proper treatment from the OIC; it's just that the digs were pretty spiffy.)

As you would expect, Toobin invariably favors the OIC team, but that is the least of the book's problems. First, and fatally, it suffers from the inevitable limitations of vision and understanding of a newly minted lawyer dealing with a highly complex event involving intelligence, foreign policy, and many levels of the U.S. government. Toobin, who hadn't even taken the bar exam when Walsh hired him, is way out of his depth.

Toobin denounces North as a liar, then bemoans the difficulties the OIC had in obtaining North's notebooks. He seems not to know that much of the material in North's notebooks is false (Ollie wasn't any more reliable in writing than in speaking). Nor, for that matter, does he seem to know (or care) that some of the most astonishing false statements were made by some of the most important (and largely uncriticized) figures. Secretary of State Shultz testified twice to Congress, giving quite different versions of what he knew and what he had done. First he said he hadn't known; then he said he had fought it all the way. One version has to be false. Would Toobin call it lying to Congress? Should the secretary be prosecuted?

The harshest treatment is reserved for

Elliott Abrams and Bud McFarlane. In the tradition of the worst congressional slanderers, Toobin first calls Abrams a liar, then admits that there is insufficient evidence to prove it. I am, thankfully, not a lawyer, so I don't know what legal ethics demand in such cases, but in civilized society you're either supposed to be able to justify an accusation or refrain from making it. Since Toobin can't prove it, he ought to have the good manners to shut up. And, to return to the former secretary of state, if you think Abrams must have known more than he let on, what about his boss? Is it possible that Shultz never asked Reagan what North was doing? And, if the answer is yes, why should it be any different with Abrams?

The treatment of McFarlane shows Toobin and the OIC at their worst. Poor McFarlane broke down in the fall of 1985—long before the attempted suicide—and he never recovered. There were various brilliant pieces of McFarlane, but they never again formed a coherent pattern; he was never able to reconstruct fully what had happened. In his congressional testimony—one of the most heart-rending moments of this entire fiasco—he virtually said to his tormentors, "Look—I don't know what I did here. Why don't you just tell me what you want me to say, and I'll admit to it." Overwhelmed by personal grief and guilt, he just couldn't be a reliable witness. The OIC decided to call him to testify against North, and to guarantee his cooperation they gave him a plea bargain so he wouldn't have to go to jail. When he proved incoherent on the stand, they rued having made the deal, and Toobin strongly hints that they should have prosecuted McFarlane and locked him away. Yet this is a man who, by any decent standard of justice, requires affection and support, not punishment.

There are some exciting moments, largely in the interplay between John John Keker—the prosecutor in the North case—and Brendan Sullivan, North's lawyer. But Toobin misses some of the most instructive moments in the case, as when Judge Gesell made it clear in his questioning of Iran-contra committee chairman Lee Hamilton that Gesell knew that Hamilton had been aware all along of what North was up to. Toobin noticed that, but ignores the broader irony: Congress accuses the Executive Branch of lying when Congress chooses to forget it had known about the affair the whole time. This was the case in North's lies to Hamilton (for which, deliciously, the jury refused to convict), as it had been earlier in the celebrated "apology" Bill Casey made to the Senate Intelligence Committee, when Daniel Patrick Moynihan pretended he had not been briefed about the mining of Nicaraguan harbors. Moynihan was the "convenient forgetter," but it was Casey who apologized.

Toobin gives not a moment's thought to the effect of the OIC on its targets. Richard Miller and Spitz Channell pled guilty to taking tax-deductible donations for a purpose (buying military supplies for the contras) that is not tax-deductible. But the donors never took a deduction, and none of the money was spent on military supplies. So why plead guilty? Because to defend yourself in such investigations, you run up hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, Xerox bills, courier chits, and the like. At a certain point, you are faced with Hobson's Choice: plead guilty and save what can be salvaged of your financial assets, or fight on, guaranteed of ruin, but with a chance of saving your name and perhaps your career.

Toobin berates Judge Walsh for trying to suppress publication of this book, and we all instinctively sympathize with an author fighting censorship. But is there no obligation by a lawyer to maintain confidentiality? When Walsh raised the question of revealing sensitive information, Toobin was right to laugh, if for the wrong reason—he doesn't understand intelligence at all, and actually seems to believe that there were no really secret secrets in the Iran-contra documents. But kiss-and-tell books like this one have a chilling effect on candor. That no one will speak openly in the presence of Jeffrey Toobin from now on is his own problem. But what government, indeed what society, can function effectively if the standards of private discussion are not sustained? □

Michael Ledeen is the author of Perilous Statecraft: An Insider's Account of the Iran-Contra Affair *(Scribner's).*

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DICKENS

Peter Ackroyd/HarperCollins/1,195 pp. $35

Kenneth S. Lynn

On workdays, Dickens went to his desk, rather formally dressed, and sat there for five hours, whether or not words flowed from his pen. At two o'clock he arose, sometimes in the midst of writing a sentence, and went for a walk that proceeded at the brisk pace of four-and-a-half miles an hour and quite commonly covered twelve to twenty miles. Famous at twenty-four for the first number of *The Pickwick Papers* (1836-37), he went on to produce twenty-two more books, many of them huge, start two important magazines, make endless public appearances, travel abroad with considerable frequency, and father ten children.

That his ceaseless activity was self-punishing is evident in the fact of his early death, at fifty-eight, from vascular ailments made worse by overwork, as well as in a confession that he voiced through his fictional counterpart, David Copperfield: "I made it a rule to take as much out of myself as I possibly could, in my way of doing everything to which I applied my energies. I made a perfect victim of myself." But as Peter Ackroyd demonstrates in his valuable new biography, the symptoms of the novelist's inner turmoil were by no means confined to his fatal inability to relax. Alexander Blok, the Russian poet, once observed that "in reading Dickens I have felt horror, the equal of which Poe himself does not inspire." Picking up on that quote, Ackroyd adds that "there is no doubt that there was within Dickens's consciousness a private world built upon nightmares and fantasies and anxieties."

A specter of violent death, for instance, reared up in the public readings from his works that he instituted in his later years. For a long time he held to the opinion that Bill Sikes's murder of Nancy in *Oliver Twist* was so "horrible" that his audiences should not be subjected to re-creations of the event. A year and a half before his death, however, he suddenly felt impelled to "commit the murder again," as he savagely phrased it in a letter. His friend Edmund Yates attended a performance:

> Gradually warming with excitement he flung aside his book and acted the scene of the murder, shrieked the terrified pleadings of the girl, growled the brutal savagery of the murder. . . . The raised hands, the bent-back head, are good; but shut your eyes and the illusion is more complete. Then the cries for mercy, dear Bill! for dear God's sake! uttered in tones in which the agony of fear prevails even over the earnestness of the prayers, the dead dull voice as hope departs, are intensely real. When the pleading ceases, you open your eyes in relief, in time to see the impersonation of the murderer seizing a heavy club and striking his victim to the ground.

Who was the symbolic target, one has to wonder, of this insensate assault? The novelist's dead mother, about whom he had bitter memories? His abandoned wife? Himself, in punishment for a multitude of sins?

Morbid themes engaged the minds, to be sure, of many Victorians—but Dickens's interest in them was obsessive. He loved the blaze of destructive fires and the grim details of grisly murders; the scenes of crimes were high on his list of sights to see, as were jailhouses and prisons; and on trips to Paris he repeatedly visited the city morgue, where he lingeringly examined the ghastly faces of the drowned. Madness was another of his obsessions; at times, indeed, he seemed overtaken by it. Having fallen in love in his mid-forties with Ellen Ternan, who was young enough to have been his daughter, he behaved "like a madman" toward his wife, as one of their daughters was later to say. Totally unfounded accusations were launched at the poor woman in out-of-control barrages that questioned her love for their children, and darkly referred to her "mental disorder." In an essay that Thackeray composed for the *Cornhill* magazine, he pretty clearly was thinking of Dickens as he described a man whose

> anger is not a brief madness, but a permanent mania. His rage is not a fever-fit, but a black poison inflaming him, distorting his judgment, disturbing his rest, embittering his cup, gnawing at his pleasures, causing him more cruel suffering than ever he can inflict on his enemy.

On the other hand, the Boston publisher James T. Fields called his good friend Dickens "the *cheerfulest* man of his age." In Trollope's concurring opinion, he was "a *hearty* man." Dickens himself insisted that, even if he were to turn sour, he would still try to "sweeten the lives and fancies of others," and as the creator of the most memorable gallery of comic characters in English fiction he was certainly entitled to that self-defense. Yet a good many of his comic characters are Hogarthian grotesques, and the fun that he has with them is often cruel. As for the bonhomie of Dickens the man, Emerson suggested to Fields that it masked an exhaustion of beneficent feeling:

> You see him quite wrong, evidently, and would persuade me that he is a genial creature, full of sweetness and amenities and superior to his talents, but I fear he is harnessed to them. He is too consummate an artist to have a thread of nature left. He daunts me! I have not the key.

Possibly the author of *Nature* was thinking of the novelist's unnatural behavior on the day he arrived in Boston. As he walked past proper households, he became oddly excited, to the point where he began pulling the bellhandles on all the doors. Even odder was his reaction to the Old South Church. "Dickens screamed," a witness averred.

Marxist appreciations of Dickens, very popular these days on college campuses, take off from Marx's remark to Engels that his novels "issued to the world more political and social truths than have been uttered by all the professional politicians, publicists and moralists put together." The great virtue of Ackroyd's portrait of an artist caught in an unending struggle with private demons is that it lays the groundwork for a renewed understanding of the novels as personal testaments, rather than as the socialist fables adored by academe.

The struggle within him seems to have originated in a childhood explosion of anger at his mother. In later years, he accused her of having neglected and betrayed him, even as he denounced his

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Kenneth S. Lynn formerly taught English at Harvard and history at Johns Hopkins and is the author, among other works, of Hemingway.

watch on the Right

Conservative Intellectuals in the Reagan Era

J. David Hoeveler, Jr.

In *Watch on the Right,* David Hoeveler gives us enlightening, often immensely entertaining, portraits of the key thinkers behind the conservative "revolution": William F. Buckley, Jr., Jeane Kirkpatrick, George Will, Hilton Kramer, Michael Novak, R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., and others.

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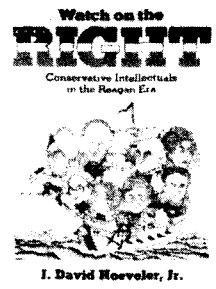

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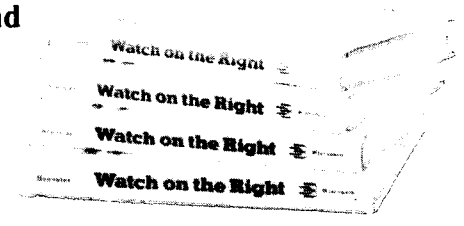

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wife for her alleged maternal crimes. Specifically, he cited his mother's desire to have him sent back to his humiliating job in the blacking warehouse, after a quarrel between his father and the manager of the warehouse had resulted in Charles's dismissal. "I know how all these things have worked together to make me what I am," said Dickens, "but I never afterwards forgot, I never shall forget, I never can forget, that my mother was warm for my being sent back." This lividly resentful statement did not acknowledge the probability that the financial affairs of Dickens's improvident father, who had only recently been released from debtor's prison, were still imperiled. Moreover, there was reason to suspect that the senior Dickens would not be kept on in his job at the Navy Pay Office. How, then, could the family afford to dispense with the seven shillings a week that twelve-year-old Charles was earning? It was considerations of family survival, not indifference to her son's sensitivities, that almost surely prompted Mrs. Dickens to urge his return to the warehouse. Dickens's summation of this anguishing episode was, in short, manifestly unfair, which suggests that his quarrel with his mother was rooted in a real or imagined grievance of an earlier time that he was unwilling to discuss.

In any event, it is no wonder that practically all of this tortured writer's novels focus on the degradation and disintegration of family relationships. Unhappy family life, in Dickens's view, was the poisoned well out of which all forms of social pathology flowed, and the restoration of familial health was the *sine qua non* of renewed social health. As Ackroyd aptly puts it, "The conclusions of his novels tend . . . to reinstate some idealised family group which can withstand change and the world. In Dickens's fiction that idealised family becomes an image of social and religious life." □

THE WEB OF DISINFORMATION:
CHURCHILL'S YUGOSLAV BLUNDER
David Martin/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/425 pp. $29.95

THE RAPE OF SERBIA: THE BRITISH ROLE
IN TITO'S GRAB FOR POWER
Michael Lees/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/384 pp. $29.95

Aram Bakshian, Jr.

As often happens with peripheral regions of a major civilization, the peoples of the Balkan peninsula have been shaken and scrambled by wave after wave of conquest. Hellenes have been followed by Hellenists, Romans by Byzantines, Ottomans by Russians, in between outbursts of tribalism or nationalism and, latterly, a veneer of European cosmopolitanism.

Like most poor relations, the Balkan peoples are quicker to claim kinship with the mainstream West than vice versa. The situation was lightly summed up by Guillaume Apollinaire (*né* Wilhelm Kostrowitzky) in an aside in *The Debauched Hospodar*, an otherwise forgettable ribald novella he wrote in turn-of-the-century Paris. A bumptious Roumanian (to use the contemporaneous spelling) is visiting the City of Lights. Having bored a local with the endless glories of his motherland, he boasts about his capital: "As for Bucharest, Bucharest is a little Paris!" The Parisian pauses, shrugs, and replies, "Perhaps, monsieur, but thank God Paris is not a big Bucharest."

I quote from imprecise memory; the last time I used this anecdote was in a 1975 conversation with Nicu Ceausescu, son of the late dictator, who was trying to convince me to visit his capital. Alas, poor Nicu! His enthusiasm for all things Romanian is hardly likely to survive his current prison sentence in the land he and his family pillaged for a quarter of a century.

Like Apollinaire's fictitious Parisian, we can all be grateful that, while the Balkans may pass for a mini-Europe, Europe is not a macro-Balkans. There is, however, an unhappy microcosm of the Balkans: the involuntarily assembled and fast unraveling Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. A blood-stained crazy quilt of a nation, Yugoslavia is politically and militarily dominated by its Serbian plurality (36 percent of the population). The Federation's Croatian (20 percent), Bosnian Muslim (9 percent), Slovene (8 percent), Macedonian (6 percent) and Albanian (8 percent) minorities have all expressed a desire for genuine autonomy, if not outright independence.

Their involuntary servitude to a bankrupt Communist authority is the grim legacy of one man, Josip Broz Tito. Until his death in 1980, Marshal Tito managed to hold Yugoslavia together through a cunning mixture of Russophobe nationalism, police-state brutality, and a cult of personality that combined elements of Stalinism and Peronism in a uniquely Balkan context.

In some ways, Tito, whose *nom de guerre* and entire biography had been fabricated, genuinely embodied Yugoslavia—an artificial nation with an invented history and name ("Land of the South Slavs"). Even in the throes of death Tito symbolized his disintegrating creation; in his eighty-eighth year, in a desperate attempt to save the failing dictator, his doctors amputated a gangrenous leg, prompting one Croatian wag to declare: "Today they're partitioning Tito; tomorrow it'll be Yugoslavia."

Yet, for all his personal dynamism, Tito's seizure of power in Yugoslavia was as much the work of a small band of British traitors and their dupes as it was the fruit of his own considerable talents. What a curious band they were, these effete Cambridge dilettantes who managed to deceive the Churchill government into one of the most cynical Allied betrayals of World War II.

In two valuable new books, David Martin and Michael Lees chronicle not only the treachery of such well-known double agents as Kim Philby, Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, and Anthony Blunt, but also the tragic self-delusion of better men, like Lt. Col. William Deakin and Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean. Evelyn Waugh, who served with Deakin in the Balkans, would later (1954) write to a mutual friend: "Bill Deakin is a very lovable & complicated man. He can't decide whether to be proud or ashamed of his collaboration with Tito . . ."

A curious subtext of the British betrayal of Yugoslavia was a particularly nasty variation of sexual politics. Much has been made in recent years of real or alleged state persecution of homosexuals in the forties and fifties, especially for security reasons. There were, however, two sides to the coin, both addressed in a recent biography of British artist Duncan Grant by Douglas Blair Turnbaugh: "Many brilliant homosexual men had become Soviet agents . . . not so much because of an enthusiasm for communism but for a kind of revenge."

So it was that, in a grim, real-life fairy tale, a free, pro-Western constitutional monarchy was murdered in its cradle by a handful of vengeful queens—a case, *pace* Hannah Arendt, of the anality of evil. The national victim was Yugoslavia, the personal victim General Draza Mihailovič, a brave and honest soldier who led the pro-Western "Četnik" resistance forces loyal to Yugoslavia's legitimate government-in-exile. The winners were Tito's Moscow-backed Partisans. Tito's post-war break with Moscow was a reflection less of nationalism than of an egotistical desire to be his *own* Stalin rather than a flunky of the Kremlin original.

Both Martin and Lees have researched rigorously and written well. While they overlap, their two books are complementary: *The Web of Disinformation* is a broad, lengthy narrative by an experienced journalist and political analyst, while *The Rape of Serbia* is the work of a man who, as a youthful British liaison officer with Mihailovič's Četniks, again and again saw his own and other dispatches suppressed or distorted by higher-ups determined to divert support from Mihailovič to Tito. Much of this disinformational dirty work was done by one James Klugmann, a less well-known member of the Cambridge Communist clique who, Martin argues, may have been the elusive "Fifth Man."

This plump, affable little traitor, always smiling, always glad to put in overtime in the file room, and generally well liked, even as he went about his murderous and deceitful work, is a reminder of how much more dangerous sincere, dedicated, selfless people can be than routine scoundrels, once they have taken the Devil's shilling.

The truth should have been obvious to everyone. As the second Lord Birkenhead, who served as a liaison with Tito's Partisan forces, would later recall:

> [Their] blind adoration of the Soviet Union was extremely irritating, as we soon discovered that the Russians were supplying practically no arms to them, whereas the British aid was immense and ever-increasing. It was our duty . . . to do our best to insure that the weapons so lavishly bestowed were used for their proper purpose of fighting the enemy, and not simply stockpiled against an eventual post-war seizure of power in the state. This task proved to be beyond our powers.

Instead, Tito, with official British backing, became the resistance leader of preference, his accomplishments inflated in the British press, while Mihailovič became a non-person, his supplies cut to a dribble. Churchill later acknowledged that this switch was one of his "biggest mistakes of the war." Mihailovič, abandoned by the allies, struggled on. He was ultimately hunted down and murdered, along with thousands of his followers, after Communist show trials in the best Stalinist tradition.

Tito, Philby, Maclean, Burgess, Blunt, and Klugmann all died in their beds—or in someone else's. Yugoslavia continues to pay the price of their perfidy. □

Aram Bakshian, Jr. has written foreign policy speeches for Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Reagan and has traveled extensively in Central and Eastern Europe.

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AN AMERICAN LIFE

Ronald Reagan/Simon and Schuster/718 pp. $24.95

Terry Eastland

This hefty doorstop of a presidential memoir is three books in one. The first covers everything from Ronald Reagan's boyhood in Illinois to his Hollywood days to his two terms as governor of California. The second deals with Reagan's presidency, with particular attention to the first year of his first term. The third and largest of the three books concerns foreign policy: the Middle East, Lebanon, Grenada, Iran-contra, the Soviets, and arms control.

For $24.95, you might think this book a real bargain. It isn't. I read all the way to the end in the hope of finding some new and important fact about Reagan or his presidency or else some interesting thoughts about politics or government or America or the cosmos. I didn't find much.

There's nothing about Reagan's prepresidential life not available from other sources, including an earlier autobiography. The treatment of Reagan's presidency doesn't add to what's already known by way of public documents, media accounts, and the memoirs of various Reagan Administration figures such as Martin Anderson, David Stockman, and William Niskanen. Notably, Anderson's chapter in *Revolution* on Reagan as a public speaker is better on the subject than the speaker's own account here.

Reagan fancies himself a Foreign Policy President, and I'm prepared to believe that history will bear him out in this regard. He is especially proud of the INF treaty negotiated during his second term, and he includes lengthy excerpts of letters he exchanged with Mikhail Gorbachev, as well as many of his own diary entries; it's good to have this kind of material on the record. But I'm hard pressed to point to much else that wasn't already known about Reagan's involvements in foreign policy. "In this book I have set out to describe everything I remember about the Iran-Contra affair," Reagan writes at one point, before he proceeds to remember very little, confessing (yet again) that he's generally at a loss on the subject.

If a presidential memoir does not give us much new information, it should at least meet a high standard of accuracy, for the sake of historians and biographers. This one falls short. In Reagan's chapter on the Reykjavik summit, for example, he recounts how on "the first day" Gorbachev "accepted in principle our zero-zero proposal for the elimination of nuclear missiles in Europe." But that happened not on the first but on the last day of the summit, and it wasn't a zero-zero proposal but one leaving both sides with about a hundred missiles.

There is something else lacking in *An American Life*: original thought. Reagan has proved more thoughtful over the years in interviews than he does in these pages. There are any number of subjects he mentions (as well as many he does not) and could usefully have pursued. But these opportunities are mostly passed by.

He says, as he has before, that his "biggest disappointment" was failing to cut federal spending and balance the budget; "I just didn't deliver as much to the people as I'd promised." Reagan makes a stab at explaining why spending wasn't adequately cut by pointing to the special interests that work their perverse influence upon Congress, and he endorses a line-item veto and a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. Of course, Reagan has said these things before. And he remains in this volume of the same (wrongheaded) belief as he was in the 1980 campaign, that excessive federal spending is largely a matter of waste, fraud, and abuse. Surely his experiences trying to reform some aspects of Social Security (which he only notes here) taught him otherwise. Reagan could have reflected on Social Security and other "entitlements" (the word isn't mentioned) that suck down larger and larger portions of the taxpayers' dollars; he could have discussed ways in which the defense budget might be sensibly cut in the post-Cold War era he did so much to create.

Reagan also could have reflected on what may prove his most enduring domestic legacy—his 372 appointments to the federal bench, including four to the Supreme Court. Alas, this huge topic is dismissed in a few unremarkable paragraphs, a tremendous slight to Reagan's achievement. Few Presidents have made judicial philosophy central to their selection process, and none has ever established the kind of institutional procedures Reagan did to ensure that the judges selected shared his philosophy.

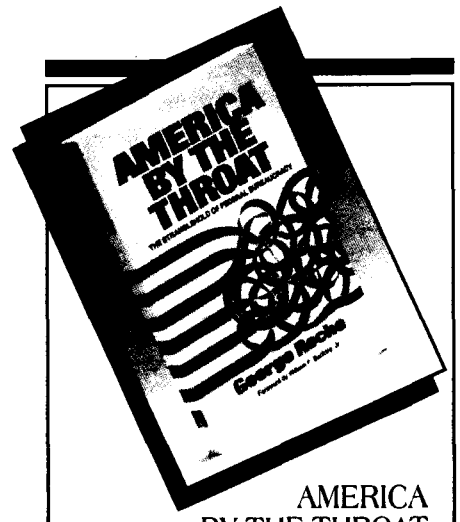
As for his Supreme Court picks, Reagan says much less than was already known about his efforts to name the first female Justice in 1981, when he appointed Sandra Day O'Connor. Regarding Robert Bork, Reagan says only that he "had to battle" Congress "for approval of my nominee to the Supreme Court, Robert Bork." Reagan does not tell the reader that the Bork nomination was rejected, nor does he discuss how he "battled" for Bork—which, in fact, he did not, failing to make even telephone contact with key senators until the vote had hardened against the nominee. Would it not be important for him to use this occasion to say what he thought of the fight over Bork, an event without precedent in American political history? Anthony Kennedy, whom Reagan eventually placed in the seat intended for Bork and who helped produce important conservative majorities in 1989, is not even mentioned. Kennedy can, at least, take consolation in the fact that his name is not got wrong in this volume; Antonin Scalia, merely Reagan's best pick for the Court and who is mentioned fleetingly by Reagan on two pages, is entered in the index as John Scalia. One other thing: Reagan misses an opportunity to comment on why he named William Rehnquist Chief Justice.

This memoir does have the trademark Reagan humor ("I've been accused of majoring in extracurricular activities at Eureka; technically, that wasn't true") and is never unseemly (the paragraph on his first marriage to Jane Wyman shows him as the gentleman he is). To his credit, Reagan is not afraid of confessing his belief in God or his need to pray, or expressing patriotic sentiment. Unlike his wife's memoir, *My Turn*, the book shows no bitterness, no Scuds fired in revenge.

Still, the memoir is a poor one—it is bland, uninformative, and even inaccurate. Some of the responsibility lies with Simon and Schuster, which paid $6 million for this book and a previously published collection of Reagan speeches, and wanted the book out as fast as possible. A rush job means less time to check basic facts or to ask Reagan associates to read appropriate passages. It also means less time for the book to ripen into something interesting.

Ultimately, however, the buck (no pun intended) must stop with Reagan himself. This, evidently, is the kind of book he wanted to write; not one for history's sake, and certainly not one for the conservative movement he once led. (N.B.: there is no mention of "abortion" in this volume, or of Reagan's education secretaries, or of William Bradford Reynolds, his chief civil rights enforcer, or of Warren Brookes, his favorite economics columnist.) The cynic

Terry Eastland, TAS's Presswatch columnist, was director of public affairs in the Reagan Justice Department from 1985 to 1988. His book on the Reagan and Bush presidencies will be published later this year by the Free Press.



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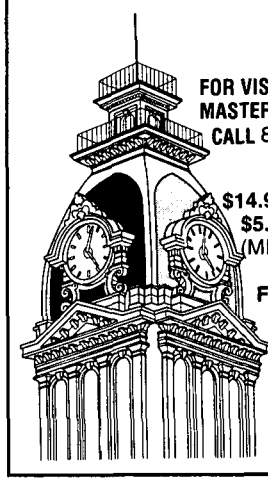

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will say that Reagan wanted to cash in, and the only answer to such a charge is he would have commanded the money he got even if he had written a good book.

Reagan of course had a ghost, Robert Lindsey, author of *The Falcon and the Snowman*. Lindsey, says Reagan in acknowledgments that I think were written by him, "was with me every step of the way." I doubt it. "I also did some brief experimenting with alcohol while I was in college," Reagan, well . . . writes at one point. But students at Eureka College in the 1920s did not "experiment with" alcohol; they "drank" it. This business of "experimenting" is a post-sixties phenomenon associated with illegal drugs. How could Reagan—or his wife—have let this sentence survive? My guess is that they did not care enough to read the draft closely. Reagan seems to have published this memoir out of a sense that this is what ex-Presidents do.

Contrary to the assessments of some reviewers of this book, it is always a mistake to judge a presidency by a presidential memoir. Ronald Reagan was the first President in fifty years to redirect both domestic and foreign policy while achieving re-election and maintaining party unity; he is the most successful and influential President since FDR and will rank, if not in the top five of all Presidents, in the very next level. One would have thought these reasons good enough for Reagan and his publisher to have taken more care. □

BREAKING BARRIERS: A MEMOIR

Carl T. Rowan/Little, Brown/395 pp. $22.95

Brock Yates

It was with considerable enthusiasm that the American Left received the memoirs of noted social climber, epicurian, and backyard plinker Carl T. Rowan. That fawning nocturnal gasbag Larry King celebrated the publication by oozing that the book is "brilliant, five years in the writing and well worth the wait." Of course, Mr. King, undefeated flyweight champion of the electronic media, might be dismissed as a mere toady in more serious circles. But consider other goliaths of the press who have stepped up to cheer Rowan's efforts: Helen Thomas, the aged baglady of political orthodoxy, whose last original question at a White House press conference was posed during the Harding Administration, noted, "In a sea of conservatism he has held the liberal banner high for the disadvantaged and the afflicted." Al Neuharth, understudy press lord and boardroom hitman, trumpeted, "If you want a gutsy, moving chronicle of where the United States was, is and must go, read this book and laugh, weep and curse . . . and hope and dream."

Even the governor of Virginia, L. Douglas Wilder, said that Rowan had written "a poignant, powerful tribute to men and women who bled and died to deliver a measure of political power to black Americans." Yet, while others of his race were bleeding and dying, Rowan was craftily greasing his way into the white establishment while taking long, soulful, backward glances at his less fortunate countrymen. During much of the period when Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evars, and James Meredith were in fact being shot, beaten, and humiliated, Rowan was viewing the proceedings from such racial hot spots as Minneapolis and Helsinki.

The one important thing we learn about Rowan is that he eats well. The book is laced with notations about various meals he enjoyed during his lifetime, from the black-eyed peas and fried rabbit of his poverty-laced childhood in McMinnville, Tennessee, to *civet de lapin* at Washington's tony Sans Souci restaurant. Rowan rambles about such childhood goodies as his father's Rocky Mountain oysters (which he disdained) to Finnish ~~reindeer~~ meat (acceptable) to elite Washington journalist Marguerite Higgins's beef ragout—which gets two rave mentions. Some of his bouts with food and drink were less than successful, including an assault of "Delhi Belly" during a tour of India with Lyndon Johnson. The reader learns that at various times Rowan's heart raced "100 miles a minute," and he describes how "sweat was running from my armpits to my waist." At one point he was struck with a fright so great that "my heart creased my scalp." Worse yet, his "blood boils" and several situations were "gut-wrenching." On one occasion he felt "little knots of doubt in my stomach." Couple this dyspepsia with his decidedly moldy liberal diet, and one is led to conclude that this quasi-memoir might be more aptly titled "Breaking Wind."

Yet Rowan is, by most measurements, a self-made man with some noteworthy credentials. He was raised in dirt-floor Southern poverty by a family beaten into submission by the racism of the twenties and thirties. His quick mind manifested itself early, and he was able to complete his education at Tennessee State and Oberlin College—with a hiatus in the North Atlantic as one of the first twenty black officers in the Navy during World War II.

Rowan determined that his future lay in journalism, where his pugnacious ("I'm not going to take any shit off anybody") attitude complemented his writing skills. His big break came in Minneapolis, where he hooked on with the *Tribune* and became a favorite of its liberal owners, John Cowles and his wife Betty. This was more than simple tokenism. Rowan proved himself to be a probing professional reporter, and gained national prominence in 1951 with eighteen stories on the racial climate in the South. Two years later he was awarded Sigma Delta Chi's Best General Reporting Prize for "Jim Crow's Last Stand." (Nineteen fifty-three also gained him inclusion in the Junior Chamber of Commerce's list of ten outstanding American young men, along with Billy Sol Estes.) Rowan was hailed again in 1954 for his wide-ranging dispatches from the Far East, where he met Nehru and Chou En Lai. It was during this period, however, that Rowan appeared slowly to distance himself from the increasingly violent civil rights movement. He met the major figures, including young Martin Luther King, Jr., and in 1955 took an uneventful ride on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus. But he appears to have witnessed the rising brutality against his fellow blacks largely from the tranquility of Minnesota. (Rowan did, in 1955, write the biography of ~~baseball~~ superstar Jackie Robinson, although he dismisses the effort in a single sentence. Overall, his description of major black figures is fragmentary at best.)

By the early 1960s, Rowan had found his niche in the lily-white Washington establishment, first as a State Department press spokesman, then, in 1963, as the ambassador to Finland. He claims that Helsinki was the Cold War counterpart of World War II Lisbon and feebly tries to position himself as a key State Department operative. During this period, one is exposed to Rowan's great personal drama: that of attempting to join Washington's exclusive Cosmos Club, which resulted in his being blackballed. This incident is treated at length while Rowan glides past the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, the civil rights marches, the Kennedy assassination, etc. For anyone seeking insight into those events, back issues of *Life* would be considerably more enlightening than Rowan's cursory recollections.

Rowan describes himself as the quintessential upwardly mobile professional, willing to make serious sacrifices in the

Brock Yates is editor-at-large of Car and Driver *magazine.*

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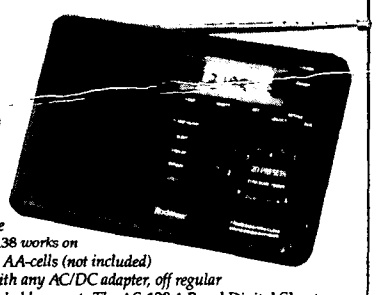

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name of fame and fortune. He candidly admits that he "sensed that most great career decisions were not made in the office, but over drinks, lunch and dinner." While other prominent blacks were trading punches and writs with such Southern luminaries as Bull Connor and Ross Barnett, Rowan was in Washington perfecting his golf swing (a four handicap), rooting for his beloved Redskins, and developing a cozy but contentious relationship with Lyndon Johnson. It was the brash Texan who appointed Rowan to his highest government position, director of the United States Information Agency, in 1964, and who is the subject of the lengthiest anecdotage. We learn, for the umpteenth time, that LBJ was crude, manipulative, and combative, yet obliquely concerned about the nation's underprivileged.

Rowan checked out of the Johnson Administration in August 1965 to begin a thrice-weekly column with the *Chicago Sun Times*. He was to be paid handsomely for his efforts—in the main to bleat about racial injustice from upper Northwest Washington and his second home in Boca Raton. He notes that his departure from the USIA represented "no pot of gold. I was simply escaping a sinking ship."

Rowan states that he was "never willing to make a hundred bucks if I could make thousands," and his reluctance to stand by Johnson when America's international reputation was fraying tends to confirm his statement. This is an understandable position for such gold-plated autobiographers as Donald Trump or Lee Iacocca, but how does it square with the values of a man who has made a career out of baying sophistries on behalf of the world's underprivileged?

Rowan's loose-limbed autobiography mercifully comes to a screeching halt after his ascension to syndicated punditry, save for an anti-Reagan anecdote that serves only as veiled bragging about his presidency of Washington's Gridiron Club. Three of the final four chapters are inane essays that have little or nothing to do with the subject's life and times.

Two of them relate the sins of Ronald Reagan and assorted conservatives. The dogma is so lugubrious and shopworn that even a dinosaur like Rowan ought to be embarrassed to repeat it. Yet one amusing sidelight comes as Rowan arm-wrestles himself over the issue of affirmative action. On the one hand he moans that "chains of bondage" are "invisible," transforming minorities into "slaves without shackles." This can be corrected only by quota hiring, affirmative action scholarships, and other social engineering. Yet in an earlier chapter he pronounces "I and other Negroes [sic] want no special favors, just the right to rise and fall on merit." Presumably that merit involves the muscle of the federal government. Either this hypocrisy eludes the author or he chooses to ignore it, as he does Watergate, the Nixon resignation, the energy crisis, and the collapse of Communism.

The choicest segment of *Breaking Barriers* (and no doubt the one that inspired Little, Brown to commission the project in the first place) begins, "It was a few minutes before 2:00 a.m. on June 14, 1988, that I was awakened by the noise of someone tampering with my bedroom window."

The delicious tale is well known. Carl T. Rowan plugged a "strapping young man" named Ben N. Smith who was gallivanting around his swimming pool in the wee morning hours. Rowan claims he was aiming at Smith's foot but instead nicked him in the hand. A vociferous opponent of handguns, Rowan not only drilled Smith in anger, but got him with an unregistered weapon. His fevered attempts at justification border on the hilarious. Rowan was let off the hook by a hung jury and has since returned to his pontifications on the subject of weaponry in the hands of the public. →

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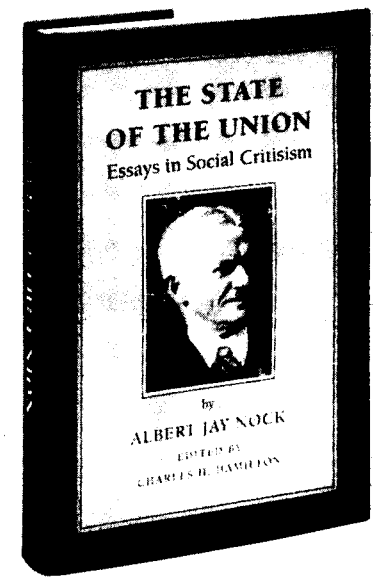

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There seems little doubt that, had not Rowan done his O.K. Corral impression, this book would have remained mercifully unpublished. The author reveals himself as a streetwise scrivener with a single goal: a quick climb up the ladder to financial and social status. There is little to criticize about such a motivation. It might be called the American Way. But for Rowan, who has gotten fat weeping crocodile tears for the Black Brothers he abandoned for the cozy Beltway establishment, it is another example of the duplicity of those whom Mario Procaccino once denounced as "limousine liberals."

Oh, yes. Carl T. Rowan drives a Lincoln. □

THE WAY OF THE WASP: HOW IT MADE AMERICA AND HOW IT CAN SAVE IT, SO TO SPEAK

Richard Brookhiser/The Free Press/171 pp. $19.95

Francis X. Rocca

"If America had been settled and founded by Frenchmen or Spaniards," Richard Brookhiser muses, "it would be a different place now. And a worse one." In *The Way of the WASP*, he makes a sketchy but persuasive case that democracy, the free market, religious liberty, and this country's material wealth are the legacy of John Locke, John Wesley, and other English Protestants. "The way of the WASP," as he calls it, "explains why we are richer than Russia, though we have fewer natural resources; calmer than Lebanon, though we have more sects; freer and more just than either." It is fundamentally a matter of character.

The now-famous acronym for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant was popularized, if not invented, by E. Digby Baltzell almost thirty years ago in *The Protestant Establishment*, a study of the American patriciate. Brookhiser is chary of the term's tony connotations and construes it as widely as possible. In the end he is concerned not with contemporary demographics but with the cultural influences summed up in those four letters.

"The WASP character is the American character," Brookhiser claims, and he describes it with a circular diagram of six mutually reinforcing "traits":

> . . . success depending on industry; use giving industry its tasks; civic-mindedness placing obligations on success, and anti-sensuality setting limits to the enjoyment of it; conscience watching over everything . . .

Four of these terms speak for themselves, but two stand out for not being character traits at all, strictly speaking. "Use" is simply Brookhiser's awkward term for practicality. By "success" he means respect and desire for earthly success as "the outward and visible sign of grace," an idea that follows from Calvinist doctrine.

Brookhiser is a persuasive apologist for these unfashionable ideas, arguing that they have led men to be productive, tolerant, considerate, and lawful, if a bit dull. Maybe WASPs are, as others complain, "bad dancers and lousy lays." In general, it is true, their cooking is insipid. Crudely, they "drink to get drunk. The only alternative to drunkenness is temperance." The arts for them are merely instruments of moral uplift or social climbing. Yet, while WASPs are neither epicures nor aesthetes, they are good neighbors, even by virtue of their shortcomings. Neglectful of history because it does not seem useful, they forget "grudges and festering hatreds." Conformists out of civic-mindedness, they have no tolerance for "charlatans and maniacs."

This is a vision tinged with nostalgia—yet not with nativism. Of all the unfashionable concepts Brookhiser re-examines, the least fashionable is that of assimilation, anathema to both multiculturalists and the few remaining believers in the Melting Pot; the word connotes insincerity and humiliation. But Brookhiser is not writing about name changes or nose jobs:

> The process is more than a matter of recognizing that life here is better than it was at home. The immigrant knew that when he arrived, sometimes before he arrived. Assimilation occurs when the outsider intuits the character traits that *make* life here better for him.

As an example Brookhiser offers an entire church: Roman Catholicism, which "arrived as the one true faith, outside of which there was no salvation, and . . . became a denomination." Anyone who has heard a nun reverently recount to her students the stirring epic of the Pilgrim Fathers—who held her Pope to be the Antichrist—will grant Brookhiser this point.

Catholics and others who have adopted the WASP character have become "the only kind of WASP that counts: WASPs by conviction." But increasingly, Brookhiser laments, WASPs lack all conviction. The character described above has been vitiated: conscience replaced by self, industry by ambition, success by gratification, civic-mindedness by group-mindedness, use by diffidence, and antisensuality by "creativity." Here "diffidence," the obscure term in this new list, means "the cumulative effect of multiple acts of deference—to other standards, cultures, even species": an "insecurity, uncertainty, sheepishness."

The demise of the WASP character has led to insider trading, underclass demoralization, compromised national security, teenage pregnancy, and atrocious manners, among other disasters. In his postmortem, Brookhiser finds that WASPs themselves are the culprits. After some clumsy attempts to suppress socialism, Freudianism, and modernism in general, WASPs have adopted them all. The social elites draw the greatest blame, commensurate with their responsibility as custodians of the universities and churches. And accordingly, as Americans look to recover their lost virtues, they turn to the elite to take the lead.

George Bush was elected, according to Brookhiser, "because the public had a hope, based in part on what it gathered from his private life, that he could bring WASP virtues to bear on them." Now, there is nothing peculiarly WASPy, even in this book's terms, about being a good father, a war hero, a loyal public servant, or a generally affable fellow. But never mind that: more serious is Brookhiser's suggestion of how the President can minister to our moral needs.

Brookhiser, who once wrote speeches for Bush, now offers him a primer on "the politics of a renaissance," a strategy for advancing an agenda of cultural reform by appealing to the nation's deeply held WASP sympathies. The administration could, for instance, push the capital gains cut by referring to industry and success; promote tuition tax credits on the grounds of "use," and justify restrictions on arts funding by renouncing the latter-day "god" of creativity.

The President is urged to take these initiatives knowing that they will earn him "storms of disapproval" from many quarters. Is this a realistic expectation of a politician whose greatest talent is for reaching consensus through compromise?

The Way of the WASP bills itself as a plan for saving America, but it hardly inspires much hope. Never mind the facetious subtitle; the main title itself is ambivalent, suggestive of both life ("the way of the West") and death (*The Way of All Flesh*). The elegiac sense seems the stronger, and not merely because Bush has been poorly cast as the Great WASP Hope. The American character as Brookhiser describes it cannot be revived for the reasons Brookhiser wants or in the ways that he suggests.

The WASP character traits are all vestiges of Puritanism. Brookhiser himself says as much, and he is consistently sensitive to the role of religion in the lives of WASPs and non-WASPs; believers should take his skepticism of ecumenicism as a mark of respect for denominational integrity. Yet when he decrees that "what American Protestantism needs, for its own good and everybody's, is a period of religious warfare," we hear unmistakably the voice of the unchurched. A free market of faiths is an intriguing concept but not a pious one. As soon as religion is reduced to an instrument of social change, piety is lost, and religion proves ineffectual for the purpose.

Every year at Thanksgiving, Americans commemorate a seventeenth-century feast celebrated by Puritan settlers in what is now Massachusetts. Most have never heard that, a year before the Pilgrims even arrived there, colonists in Virginia had already celebrated their own version of that singularly American holiday. Plymouth, which was intended to be the New Jerusalem, looms vastly larger in our national historical consciousness than Jamestown, which was a profit-making venture. This suggests whence the inspiration for the way of the WASP first arose, and where its redemption would have to be sought. □

Francis X. Rocca is a writer living in New Haven, Connecticut.

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AURORA 7

Thomas Mallon/Ticknor & Fields/238 pp. $18.95

John R. Dunlap

On Thursday, May 24, 1962, at 7:45 a.m. EST, the second U.S. manned orbital space flight was undertaken when the *Aurora 7* was launched from Cape Canaveral with astronaut Malcolm Scott Carpenter aboard. Although the flight made the intended three orbits within the anticipated five hours, Carpenter flubbed his retrofire maneuver during re-entry and overshot the expected landing position by nearly 300 miles. For about an hour, sixty-five million television viewers were held in suspense, until Walter Cronkite announced that Scott Carpenter had been located bobbing on a life raft beside his floating spacecraft northeast of the Virgin Islands. Carpenter, safe and in good health, was picked up by a helicopter dispatched from the aircraft carrier USS *Intrepid*; Cronkite and his audience were mightily relieved; and the American space program had again inched forward without, as yet, serious mishap.

In a sense, the foregoing is what Thomas Mallon's second novel, *Aurora 7*, is about. The space mission is the occasion for the novel's setting and pacing, the means of its unity and motivation, the mirror of its point of view and thematic musings. In *Aurora 7* Mallon has cooked up a neat gimmick that is all the neater for not being the least gimmicky.

Aurora 7 is mostly about a bright eleven-year-old boy teetering on the edge of puberty and obsessed with the space program; our story finds young Gregory Noonan suspended between a sullen rejection of the world and a grateful acceptance. If, like his school psychologist, we were to treat Gregory as "a case," we might anticipate that "Gregger," as his father calls him, would eventually (perhaps by the age of nineteen) find some kind of middle ground.

But Gregory's impatience with ambiguity runs deep. Jim and Mary Noonan, his parents, are a "moderately religious" and eminently decent couple in their forties, vaguely worried about (and soon to be panicked by) the spooky world their only child seems to be moving into. Although Gregory attends public school and therefore is instructed in the faith only on Wednesday afternoons, his mind is thoroughly Catholic, with a preference for neatness and order. So his early adolescent crisis will have to be short, and its resolution decisive.

In fact, Gregory's crisis (*Does his father love him? Something is calling Gregory away—why won't the grown-ups quit tugging back on him?*) has been troubling him only a few weeks, and *Aurora 7* centers chiefly on the resolution, which occurs in just over the four hours and fifty-five minutes of Scott Carpenter's flight. In mind and heart, Gregory is up in "the captive freedom of orbit" with Carpenter. Under his shirt, he has hidden a small portable radio connected to an earphone, so that he can follow the space mission minute by minute while attending his fifth-grade class at Melvyn Park School in a suburb of New York City.

Well before school is out, on impulse (something on which the fastidious Gregory otherwise never acts), he bolts from the schoolyard on his bike, pedals furiously to the local railroad station, and catches a commuter train to ride the twenty-five miles to Grand Central Terminal. Earlier that morning, he had seen on television the crowds at Grand Central, who themselves were watching the space mission on a huge screen under the vaulted ceiling of the Terminal. That's where Gregory suddenly knows he has to be, and that's where we sense that he is going to collide with his destiny.

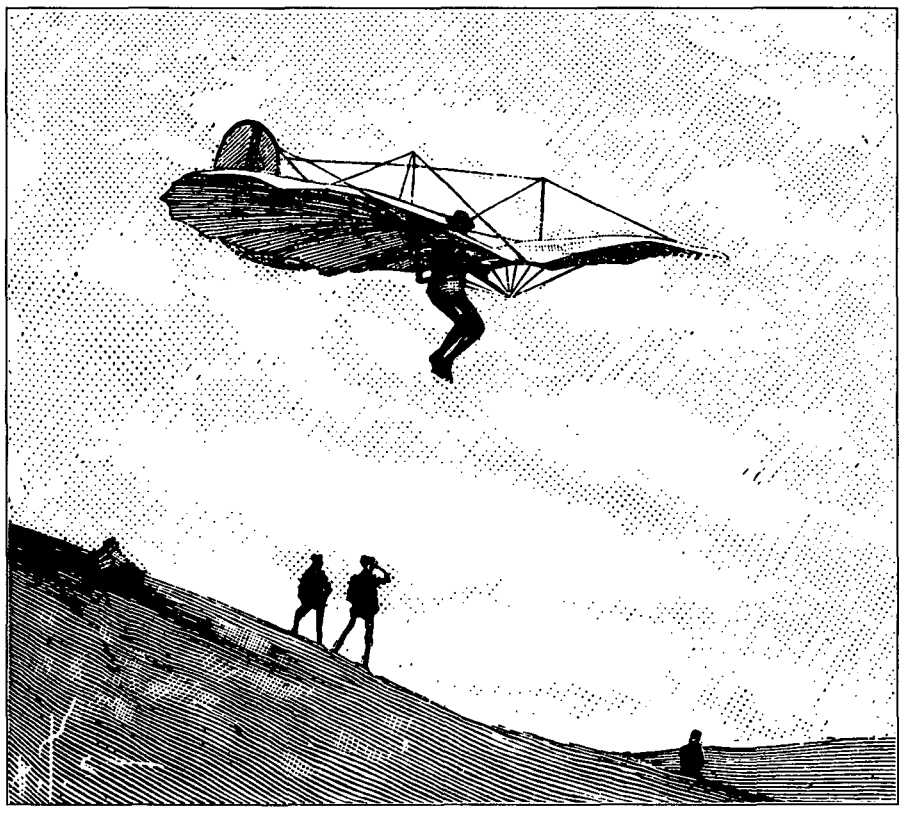
That destiny will involve several other characters whom we get to know through intermittent sketches. At St. Agnes Parish in the city, Tommy Shanahan is a 29-year-old Catholic priest who, five months before the convening of the Second Vatican Council, is already taken with "modern problems": to wit, a romantic fascination with what is just beginning to be called the "Third World," and a propensity for attaching religious significance to his own restless vanity and horniness.

In counterpoint to the self-involved Father Shanahan, Eddie Rodwicki and Herbert Johnson evince an unassuming dignity. Rodwicki is a New York City cabbie who loves his work for its "unpredictability"; he has a strong wife, three kids, and the startling ability to analyze character with instant and devastating precision.

Johnson, a porter at Grand Central Terminal, appears briefly in Gregory's field of vision as an anonymous "Negro man with friendly yellow teeth." Within a few deft pages, though, moving backward and forward in time, Mallon dissolves the anonymity, giving an intimate portrait of a man who "escaped" Georgia for Harlem a quarter of a century before, who is warmed by the sound of a Georgia lady's voice, and whose son will, in a few more years, die in Southeast Asia.

There is also Elizabeth Wheatley, professional writer and proto-feminist, whose face "is an uncanny feat of simultaneous animation and fixity." Elizabeth, cynical about space missions and stony in her pursuit of ambition, will turn out to be softer than she pretends.

But Tony DiPretorio, a CBS production crewman and "one of the church" (i.e., a prolific homosexual half out of the closet in 1962), will be a good deal coarser in a few more decades and hugely fretful about his health. Among several other minor characters is Joanne Kalkowski, a 22-year-old file clerk who is "slightly cracked"; in the coming years, after her father dies, she will spend some time in a state mental institution and be released to join a class of Americans whom social activists will call "the homeless."



Mallon plays freely with the sense of history his 1991 readers will bring to bear on these 1962 characters. Like Scott Carpenter (or for that matter, like a library patron browsing through decades-old copies of newsmagazines), we get a heaven's-eye view of the world, which makes ordinary hindsight feel like providential foresight. We are given to know, for example, that, in May 1962, while (a) John F. Kennedy is thinking about the newspaper he may start up in 1969 when he retires to Massachusetts after his second term in office, (b) Lee Harvey Oswald has just returned from the Soviet Union greatly annoyed with Soviet authorities for the lowly treatment accorded an American defector of his obvious importance.

Older readers, by the way, will remember that the year Scott Carpenter almost lost his life was a bumper year for deaths of all manner of other celebrities: William Faulkner, Isak Dinesen, e.e. cummings, Robinson Jeffers; Niels Bohr and Arthur Compton; Mickey Cochrane and Bobo Newsom; Arthur Vining Davis and Enrico Mattei; Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Trevelyan; George Sokolsky and C. Wright Mills; Bernard Hubbard and Auguste Piccard; Ernie Kovacs, Hoot Gibson, Charles Laughton, Marilyn Monroe, Thomas Mitchell; Adolf Eichmann and Eleanor Roosevelt. The carnage is recorded in the 1963 *Britannica Book of the Year*, one of the sources acknowledged by Mallon in his preface.

With *Aurora 7*, Thomas Mallon has taken us on a flight of keen sensibility and relentless intelligence. When we touch down, perhaps a little giddy from the heights at which Mallon likes to romp, it becomes apparent that *Aurora 7* is, finally, a novel about Providence, but not exactly the Providence that plays dice. It is a novel about the Providence some of us know—and all of us at least remember—as the God of Abraham: cranky, jealous, fond of spectacle, prone to snits. □

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THE TELEPHONE BOOTH INDIAN
A. J. Liebling/North Point Press/148 pp. $9.95 (paper)

A NEUTRAL CORNER: BOXING ESSAYS
A. J. Liebling/North Point Press/245 pp. $19.95

Christopher Caldwell

In his introduction to *The Telephone Booth Indian*, Roy Blount describes returning from graduate school one summer to Mississippi and his "teetotaling" parents (I mention the adjective as it seems to imply sins beyond that of abstinence). His parents having expressed concern about Roy's career, he retrieved his copy of *The Most of A. J. Liebling* and said—bravely, as I do not suppose Ole Miss' in the early sixties to have been the most Semitophilic corner of the globe—that he wanted to be like the boozy, grotesquely corpulent Jew in the back-jacket photo.

Most every journalist would. Throughout a career spent mostly at the *New Yorker*, Liebling was a literary reviewer, food writer, war correspondent, fabulist, sports columnist, and social critic, writing always with unbounded bravura and gusto and an out-of-nowhere erudition that has been matched since only by Tom Wolfe. "The upper classes are my museum, the lower classes my bordello," as English novelist Ronald Firbank put it, and Liebling was a sort of cross between Firbank and Henry Mayhew, between the finicky observer of folkways and the libertine-at-large.

Telephone Booth Indians were the sleazy entrepreneurs who used the phone booths in a handful of Broadway office buildings to launch elaborate scams. These included selling non-existent lots in the swamps of New Jersey (ten or twelve times), selling hat-check concessions for non-existent restaurants, and booking tours for a troupe of non-existent female boxers. It's easy to see how such tales appealed to Depression-era readers: with its elaborate description of confidence tricks the book must have seemed like a *How to Make Money in Stocks* for the down-and-out. Where the Indians veer into pathology, however, is in their absolute *preference* for "soft money" over the hard-earned variety. When Count de Pennies, a bigamist who wears cinnamon-colored suits with trousers up to his breastbone, actually begins to thrive in a perfectly legal tour company, he spoils it by writing a bad check to the railroad, just for the hell of it. (" 'It must have been a terrible temptation to him to stay honest,' Morty says, 'but he resisted it.' ")

The other pieces in the collection are eight-million-stories-in-the-naked-city writing, tales of scraping by, of living on one's wits. The chapter on Tim Mara, bookmaker extraordinaire, explains his accounting procedures. The one on hat-check girls gives a history of tipping in New York. In another, George Nicholson, a former law student and Joe Louis's sparring partner, says, "I got out of the habit of trying to study law, on account of I saw I couldn't talk fast enough." In one of the best pieces, a profile of a Swiss woman who runs a boardinghouse for wayward pugilists, Liebling speaks lovingly of boxers and boxing: "Prize fighters . . . are the most tranquil of athletes. Unlike baseball players and jockeys, fighters seldom have noisy arguments. Not fighting is their avocation."

A *Neutral Corner*—which takes its name from an Eighth Avenue boxers' barroom—contains all of the boxing writing Liebling did between the 1955 publication of his first boxing volume, *The Sweet Science*, and his death in 1963. The earlier collection is considered by many the best boxing book ever written, the kind of book that develops waiting lists in used book stores and gets stolen from libraries; Liebling fans will greet this new one as if it were the Dead Sea Scrolls.

A Neutral Corner is not as good as its predecessor, but only because professional boxing in the fifties and sixties was not as good as it was in the thirties and forties. Liebling wrote brilliantly in what he called the "blinded-with-blood-he-swung-again school of fight writing," particularly in his account of the 1959 bout between Floyd Patterson and Ingemar Johansson, which left the bloated Swede "spread out like a wall-to-wall carpet." But he is better at evoking the trainers, managers, and hangers-on who made up the fight world and congregated in places like The Neutral Corner, and that gift remained as strong in Cassius Clay's era as it was in Joe Louis's.

Liebling's description of a fight between the Italian lightweight champion and a Casablancan welterweight is framed by an informative history of boxing in—of course—Tunisia. The account of a match in Shoreditch Town Hall veers off into a discussion of betting as a pathology. Leapfrogging Disraeli, Liebling ventures that the Jewish boxers "Daniel Mendoza and Dutch Sam, whose exploits filled the years between 1788 and 1814 . . . did more to establish the Jew on the English scene than any other two historical figures." Clearly, he has read far more than Nat Fleischer's *Ring Record Book*, and the collection is peppered with homages to great boxing writers of the past, not only Hazlitt but even Pierce Egan, author of the early-nineteenth-century *Boxiana*, whom Liebling describes variously as "the Polybius," "the Thucydides," "the Juvaini," "the Ibn Khaldun," "the Sainte-Beuve," and "the Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr." (sorry, Arthur Jr.) "of the London Prize Ring."

He is less enamored of scrappers in the business ring, the "fellows who know to get a dollar." When con artists got clout to go along with their "angle," Liebling seemed to lose his appetite for them. His 15,000-word hatchet job on news mogul Roy Howard, tacked onto *The Telephone Booth Indian*, shows Liebling at his vitriolic zenith. Six decades on, it appears that numerous newspapers died in the twenties and thirties due to tightening credit and competition from radio and newsreels. But, to Liebling, capitalists like Howard were throwing people out of work to merge and consolidate enterprises that were perfectly viable, lining their own pockets and threatening free competition. (It is uncanny, in fact, how much the piece resembles the anti-takeover screeds of recent years.) Worse, he saw Howard as responsible for poisoning the *New York Telegraph* with hicks who wrote in a style he called "Oklahoma Byzantine":

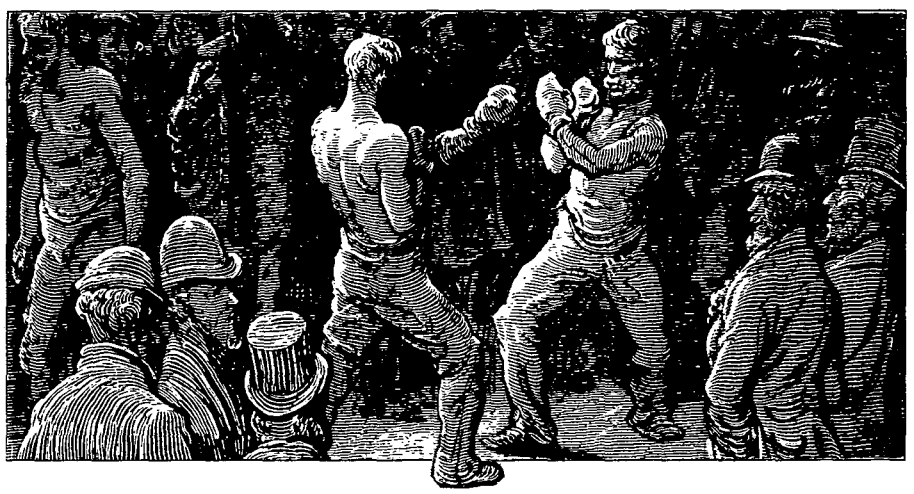
> It was steadily losing readers, too, many of them people who had developed hallucinations from reading its prose and were dragged from subway trains slapping at adjectives they said they saw crawling over them.

Worst of all was the tiny man's political opportunism, his pathetic dreams of being a kingmaker:

> The publisher showed no warmth for Roosevelt until the summer after the inauguration, when "New Deal" had become a password to popularity. He then threw himself on the President's neck with all the shyness of a hostess in a navy cafe.

As a union-basher basher, an FDR idolater, and charter member of the Alger Hiss Dupe Club, Liebling was a liberal of high principle and rare mirth, capable of floating free of the party line on most anything (his support for FDR rested largely on the President's anti-isolationism). What stands out about his relationship to his characters is how apolitically he treats them. For most of the people in both books led Hobbesian lives and held terrible jobs; if there had been such a thing as work-satisfaction surveys in those days, these guys would have fit in somewhere between the circulation department of the *New York Daily News* and the people who clean the seats between screenings of *Henry and June*. Yet Liebling is so free of condescension that he can treat them as he would friends, i.e., make fun of them: "The promoter has been celebrated for years as the most unrelenting foe of the English language in the sports business"; "Parker is not considered much of a fighter here—a good banger, but slow of intellection." Liebling is content to call them "low-life."

Because it had low life in an abundance unavailable elsewhere, Liebling loved New York to the exclusion of the rest of the country, which he took a rather dim view of. He was both an urban historian and an ethnographer, and it's curious to see how the city has shifted its axis in the three to five decades since he wrote. There are no longer boarding houses half a block from Central Park West or working tugboats at the South Street Seaport, and "pastrami" is no longer a word exotic enough to italicize. One of Liebling's favorite bantamweights was born on Gay Street



Christopher Caldwell is assistant managing editor of The American Spectator.

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in Greenwich Village, a neighborhood not now famous for producing prizefighters. Still, no amount of demographic or architectural change will stale his work. New Yorkers of Mayor Dinkins's stripe, who cherish their city's "beautiful mosaic," could learn a lot from Liebling—perhaps even Liebling's keen sense of what it feels like to be an individual tile. □

ILLIBERAL EDUCATION: THE POLITICS OF RACE AND SEX ON CAMPUS

Dinesh D'Souza/The Free Press/300 pp. $19.95

Jonathan D. Karl

American colleges and universities have come under almost unremitting attack since 1985, when William Bennett, as chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, began to condemn the higher education establishment for falling standards and politicized classrooms. The early assault, primarily from conservatives, focused on the lack of academic requirements, over-specialized study, and the displacement of the Great Books. The most recent attacks on political correctness include a substantial liberal backlash against the enforcers of a new campus orthodoxy, as described in cover stories in *Newsweek*, *New York* magazine, and the *New Republic*, and articles by liberals Irving Howe and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

With the political savvy he showed as a Reagan policy adviser, Bombay-born Dinesh D'Souza attempts to fuel the liberal backlash rather than add to the exhaustive conservative critique. He tries desperately to do more than preach to the converted, who will nod in agreement at any lambasting of left-wing colleges and universities. In his quest to reach a larger audience, he cleverly capitalizes on his status as a "person of color." In the first chapter he explains, "I especially empathize with the struggles of minority students. These are the challenges I faced very recently in college, and continue to face as a first-generation immigrant." (Chances are D'Souza's struggles in college stemmed more from his editorship of the combative *Dartmouth Review* than from his immigrant status, but that's another story.)

By citing a series of campus horror stories, D'Souza, playing the unlikely role of a progressive, effortlessly demonstrates that the new campus orthodoxy stands opposed to the progressive ideals of racial integration, equality of opportunity, and academic freedom. The argument is gaining widespread acceptance precisely because these threatened ideals are treasured by most Americans—whether liberal or conservative.

The uninitiated will be struck with disbelief at just how bad things are on campus. D'Souza documents an era of racial hysteria with extensive research (763 footnotes) and fresh reporting, rather than sociological or philosophical analysis. He revisits the major campus events of the past few years—the bashing of Western civilization at Stanford, the protest over Lee Atwater's appointment to the board of trustees at Howard University, and discrimination against Asian-Americans at Berkeley in the name of affirmative action. The evidence he presents speaks for itself; policies initiated to combat racism have inflamed racial tension, re-segregated the schools, and ravaged liberal education.

The ideal of multi-culturalism is an appealing one for most Americans, but, by citing example after example, D'Souza shows that under the banners of multi-culturalism, tolerance, and diversity, something quite different is being carried out. He explores the well-publicized trashing of Stanford's core curriculum in 1988 as a vivid example of the new orthodoxy's first principle: Western civilization is inherently racist.

D'Souza uses the Stanford example to show that multi-culturalism is undertaken as part of an ideological agenda rather than as an attempt to understand non-Western cultures. He finds that "Non-Western cultures are ransacked to find representative figures who are congenial to the Western progressive agenda." He cites *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, a book now included in Stanford's new and improved core. This Guatemalan woman's autobiography is included because "she speaks for all the Indians of the American continent." In fact, Rigoberta is a Marxist educated in France, who attended Popular Front meetings in Paris, renounced marriage and childbearing, and dictated her autobiography to French feminist Elizabeth Burgos Debray. Multi-cultural study, as exemplified here, is undertaken not to learn about other cultures but to promote a radical egalitarian political agenda, to build the self-esteem of minorities, and to attack Western civilization. As a Stanford professor explained to D'Souza, "It would be very difficult to confront embarrassing facts about Third World norms and attitudes in a politically charged environment." The result is ignorance, like that of the Vassar student who wrote in a student newspaper, "Historical evidence (slavery, colonialism, imperialism, capitalism) shows that it is the white man who has the monopoly on cruelty and sadism."

D'Souza documents incidents of speech restricted in the name of diversity, openness, and free speech itself. (My own college newspaper, the *Vassar Spectator*, was censored for "destroying the atmosphere which welcomes the free exchange of ideas.") Yet far worse than the occasional punishment of an offensive remark or censorship of a politically incorrect newspaper is the restriction of academic freedom. D'Souza explores disturbing incidents of professors intimidated into silence, and courses canceled at Harvard and Michigan.

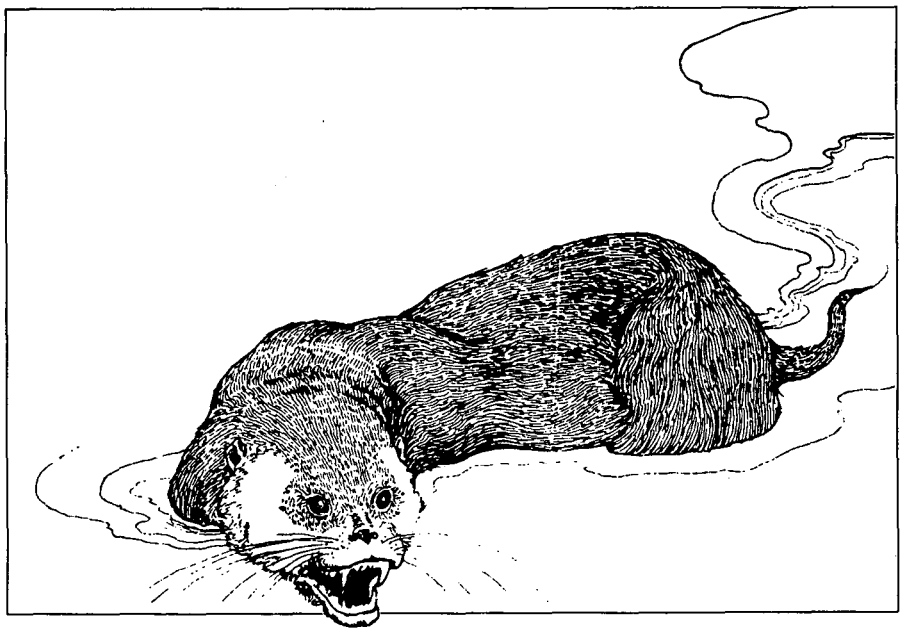
The most comically ineffective and unprincipled characters in D'Souza's story are college administrators. They are shown capitulating to practically any student display of force with token gestures that do nothing to address root problems and everything to destroy liberal education:

- In response to students who took over his office, Stanford president Donald Kennedy insisted, "The university will not negotiate on issues of substance in response to unlawful coercion." The next day he caved in to the demands of the protesting students illegally occupying his office.
- When Howard University students forcibly occupied the school's administrative buildings to protest Lee Atwater's appointment to the board of trustees, President James Cheek bravely announced, "Any student or other individual who persists in occupying any university building or otherwise disrupts university operations will be arrested and/or expelled." Within days, the school gave in to student demands, Atwater resigned, nobody was expelled or arrested, and President Cheek declared, "What has occurred on Howard's campus is refreshing."
- Rutgers Chancellor T. Edward Hollander was "delighted" when protestors prevented him from speaking by seizing his platform during a university conference. "I've waited ten years for students to show this kind of unrest," he told the *New York Times*.

D'Souza sees affirmative action as the cause of much of the insanity on campus. He uses Berkeley as a case study in the absurdities of "proportional representation" (racial quotas). At Berkeley, affirmative action programs have been shown to discriminate against Asians. A policy requiring proportional representation of ethnic groups has created a three-tiered admissions policy that applies separate standards to blacks and Hispanics, whites, and Asians. Asian immigrants are left to pay the highest price for historic discrimination by whites against blacks.

The varying admissions standards predictably result in disparities in academic performance. While whites and Asians graduate Berkeley at a rate of 65 to 75 percent, the rate for Hispanics is 50 percent, for blacks 40 percent.

Faced with an intense academic challenge, the black student is offered a blanket explanation for his troubles: racism. The college is "institutionally racist" because it has few minorities in the faculty and administration; the curriculum is racist because it is composed of works written predominantly by whites. The student is encouraged to divert his energies from self-improvement through learning to political action against oppression. At many elite



Jonathan D. Karl is a reporter-researcher at the New Republic.

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universities, there is a backlash against the very concept of academic standards. In the words of one Berkeley student activist, "qualifications" and "standards" are "the catch phrases of the politics of exclusion."

A bill drafted by Tom Hayden, currently before the California legislature, not only requires strict quotas for University of California admissions, but seems to apply those quotas to graduation rates as well. In other words, if 11 percent of the freshman class were black, four years later 11 percent of the graduating class would have to be black. Besides making a mockery of academic standards, the Hayden bill would further inflame racial tensions by making race a deciding factor in grading as well as admissions.

D'Souza concludes with a modest proposal. He defends affirmative action, but argues it should be based on class rather than race—on the actual disadvantages suffered by individuals. The children of a black doctor would no longer be given preferential treatment over the children of a white Kentucky coal miner. Such a policy would address another anomaly of race-based affirmative action pointed out by sociologist William Julius Wilson: it disproportionately benefits wealthy blacks, hence increasing the "schism between lower-income and higher-income black families," while doing nothing to help what Wilson calls "the truly disadvantaged": the underclass.

At times, D'Souza exaggerates the depths to which American higher education has sunk. He refers to *I, Rigoberta Menchu* as "the text which best reveals the premises underlying the new Stanford curriculum," but the book is an extreme example in a curriculum that still includes Aristotle, Augustine, and Shakespeare. In another instance, he quotes a Penn State professor as saying, "I would bet that Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* is taught in more English departments today than all of Shakespeare's plays combined." This is a highly doubtful, reckless statement that D'Souza sees as "an emerging consensus." Such exaggerations, however rare, only weaken his case.

But D'Souza's case is so devastatingly strong that even liberals, who would usually dismiss him because of his *Dartmouth Review* ties, are taking him seriously. He is now taking his show on the road, speaking at over thirty campuses on an issue which, until recently, was taboo. So far, he has received an often stormy reception—Tufts University rated his appearance a high-risk event and dispatched extra security officers to keep the peace—but he has been invited, and even allowed to speak. The tide *must* be turning. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 7)

Whom Is This Guy?

A commentary by William Tucker in the March issue ("Give Us This Day Our *Daily News*") criticized New York Governor Mario M. Cuomo for attending a labor rally for striking workers of the *New York Daily News*.

Mr. Tucker labors under the misconception that the Governor expressed support for the bargaining positions of unionized *Daily News* workers whom [sic], in Mr. Tucker's view, are overpaid and underworked.

Your readers may like to know that Governor Cuomo did not take sides in the *Daily News* strike, nor has he ever taken sides in a strike. The Governor believes that it is not his role to rule on the merits of the bargaining positions taken by management or labor in a negotiation.

Governor Cuomo attended the rally to make one fundamental point; the labor movement in this country has meant the dignity of a living wage and decent working conditions for millions of Americans, including many whom [sic] have never been a member of a union.

It has become fashionable in recent years to blame unions for the nation's economic problems, and strikes such as the one at the *Daily News* often generate comment to the effect that our nation would be better off if workers did not have the right to organize and bargain collectively.

Whenever the Governor hears such comment, he makes himself available to remind people that, whatever one thinks about the reasonableness of a particular bargaining position in a particular negotiation, unionism has spurred social progress in this country that government, churches, and philanthropic institutions were unable to bring about.

By not taking sides in strikes, the Governor's administration can help to bring management and labor together to resolve a dispute. Both management and labor at the *New York Post* credited the Governor with valuable assistance in reaching an agreement that kept that newspaper alive.

—Tom Conroy
Deputy Press Secretary to the Governor
State of New York Executive Chamber
Albany, New York

William Tucker replies:

I take my text from the *New York Times*, December 11, 1990, p. B3:

At Rally, Cuomo Supports Unions in News Strike
by David E. Pitt

Governor Mario M. Cuomo publicly proclaimed his support for the striking unions at the *Daily News* last night, telling thousands of pro-labor demonstrators outside the paper's East 42nd Street headquarters that it was time for "fairness and reasonableness" at the bargaining table.

As a crowd put by the police at 6,500 people chanted, "Union! Union!" and "Scabs go home!" the Governor hailed "the courage and sacrifice of the union movement" and denounced the federal law that has allowed the *News* to replace its 2,300 striking workers with permanent nonunion employees.

That law, Mr. Cuomo said, standing on a packed dais facing the American flag-bedecked facade of the *News* building, "is not fair, it is not right, it is destructive of equitable collective bargaining—and it must be challenged."

"Brothers and sisters," Mr. Cuomo said, "we need to establish a balance in this country between the people who work and the people who invest and manage."

"Stay strong," he told the cheering crowd. "You're fighting for all of us."

Governor Cuomo's appearance at the rally was his most overt gesture of support for the striking unions since the labor crisis began building at the *News* almost a year ago. Also at the rally were John Cardinal O'Connor, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York; the Rev. Jesse Jackson, and dozens of labor leaders. . . .

The files show that neither Mr. Cuomo nor his press officers made any objection to the *Times*'s characterization of his appearance at the rally. It is flattering, if somewhat puzzling, that he has taken the trouble to dispute our *American Spectator* story, which said the same thing in much less detail.

When You're Number One

Usually I don't write to mysterious P.O. Boxes, since the usual result is brown paper–wrapped packages and a suspicious wife. However, I'm making an exception in this case because I want to commend Michael Ledeen on his fine article in your March number ("We *Are* Number One"). He has begun a very worthwhile investigation of the likely aftermath of the present conflict, and I applaud him on it. I would, however, caution that not all observers are as sanguine as he that democracy can be implanted in the Mideast. We'll see, I'm sure.

—Curtis Barton
Chelmsford, Massachusetts

Perhaps it is fitting that an institution founded by an Arab, the American Enterprise Institute, now promotes some thinkers who's [sic] ideas must come out of the *Thousand and One Nights*. At least Richard Pearle [sic], who so well succeeded in his objective of getting us to go to war to destroy Iraq, spares us musings of a postwar utopia.

Michael Ledeen, who helped bring us Iran-Contra, now promises us that Arabs will love Americans or at least behave in subservience to Americans, Israelis, Englishmen, and the kings and Sheiks who will now do as we tell them.

I quote you instead from R. E. McMaster's newsletter, the *Reaper*, from among his list of losers in the Gulf War:

> American business interests, U.S. military personnel, American businessmen and tourists worldwide are now marked as targets for terrorists globally. From now on, Americans will travel internationally in fear. Americans at home, for the first time in a long time, no longer feel physically secure as biological and chemical warfare is a real and deadly threat.

The IRA station bombing in London is the first in seven years to target innocent civilians; it is already a response to America's unleashing of the new era of justified "collateral damage" for greater political purpose.

Then there's the London *Economist*: "Millions of Arabs will consider the surviving regimes tainted by association with the West . . . "

And then one might quote Vladimir Bukovsky: "The only country that really benefits without losing anything in dollars is the Soviet Union." The war has undermined the reformers within the Soviet Union who are blamed for bringing about the demise of yet another Soviet ally and risking Moslem enmity for Russia too.

Such are the real consequences of Bush's war and the new reality for Soviets, that it's no longer true that democracies don't start wars? [sic]

—Jon Basil Utley
Committee to Avert
A Mideast Holocaust
Vienna, Virginia

Michael Ledeen's euphoric proclamation of a "Second Democratic Revolution" illustrates the inside-the-Beltway delusion with respect to the Persian Gulf war that now affects most of Washington. Of course the role of diplomacy and war is to advance national interests, but how, exactly, does our intervention in this "Arab-Arab" dispute over money and oil production, as then-U.S. Ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie characterized it, serve American interests?

The notion that over the medium- to longer-term the United Sates alone is willing or even able to establish the "New World Order" George Bush envisions is absurd, particularly with respect to the Middle East. The various Arab countries do not recognize "democracy" as a final objective of this conflict, even were such a thing possible, nor should Americans be so foolish as to believe that "stability" in the region serves American and Western interests.

During a period of relative stability, even including its war with Iran, Iraq managed to harness its economic and human resources to such a degree that it was able to directly threaten Western access to Persian Gulf oil (although it

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is far from clear that this was Hussein's true aim). Had a few more years gone by, Hussein might have been able to perfect delivery systems for the crude nuclear weapons he is said to already possess, thereby raising the price of an eventual Western military intervention. This is why America, along with Britain and France, are today bombing Iraq into the Middle Ages.

Moreover, by convincing the fragile Saudi and other Gulf oil-producing kingdoms to go to war against Iraq, we have committed ourselves to stay on indefinitely to protect them from Iran, a rebuilt Iraq, or even a newly expanded Syria; and all of them will no doubt enjoy the active support of the Soviet Union. Is there political support in the U.S. Congress or among the American people for an extended military deployment in the Gulf to garrison the Gulf oil-producing states? I would suggest that the answer is no.

Mr. Ledeen should study the unhappy history of the British occupation of Iraq and what is now Kuwait, and count the thousands of British lives that were spent over a period of decades to enforce Western access to Middle East oil. The only "leverage" we will have after this war ends, at least in formal terms, is when and if we finally decide to withdraw. Only if you understand that this war will never end, at least short of the complete annihilation of the Arab people, and that radical leaders in the region will be very happy to slowly remove an occupying military force one soldier at a time, does the political folly of Mr. Ledeen's thin argument really hit home.

Enjoy the gusto while it lasts, fellas.

—Christopher Whalen
Washington, D.C.

Michael Ledeen replies:
Thank you, Curtis Barton. I'm not particularly optimistic about the chances for democracy in the Middle East, at least in the next few years. But I am convinced that we have to support it, and that unless we press folks like the Saudis to democratize, we'll be left with the usual unpleasant—and inevitably losing—choice between nasty repressers and crazy revolutionaries. So it's best to get going on the liberalization process.

No thanks to Jon Basil Utley, whose organization's name turns my stomach, and whose ideas—he's one of those misguided souls who wanted to leave Saddam alone to build up his nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons—have been disgraced by events. Nonetheless, shameless to a fault, he writes idiocies of various sorts. First, he totally misstates my arguments (and misspells Richard Perle's name in passing). I didn't talk about subservience, I just thought there might be some Arab leaders—and citizens—who prefer being on the winning side. Second, he gives us a long quotation that is wrong about everything (there has been no terrorism directed against Americans during the Gulf War) and then a stupidity of his own: the IRA has been bombing in London for decades; what else is new? Finally, in a locution that fits his twisted brain, he seems to suggest that we started the Gulf War. I suppose he thinks that we caused Hitler to invade Poland, too.

Finally, Christopher Whalen, who's so rude it makes one wonder if he's really related to the wise and thoughtful Richard Whalen who founded the Whalen Company. Anyway, where we disagree is over a serious matter (and not one that's either inside or outside the Beltway—that is, it's not an "inside Washington" matter, but a question of foreign policy): Why did we go to war? For Whalen it's simply "oil and money." For me, it's trying to lay down some rules for the post-Cold War world. One of those rules is that totally unwarranted aggression in strategically sensitive areas will not be tolerated. Whalen is right when he underlines Saddam's creation of weapons of mass destruction as one of the big motives for our military action. But he is quite wrong when he thinks that we smashed Iraq "into the Middle Ages" because we were worried about a higher cost later on if we didn't act now; we did that because Saddam would not play by the rules.

Retorts from Schwartz
Lauren Weiner responded to my criticism of her Managua article (Correspondence, *TAS*, April 1991) by compounding her original error, which was to recycle gossip instead of reporting journalistically.

I went to Nicaragua myself in February. Just then Mrs. Chamorro took further active and substantial steps to remove the army and police from Sandinista influence. Her victory is *not* being squandered.

I visited Montelimar, the resort built under Sandinista Herty Lewites's administration. It is indeed a boondoggle, reflecting the Marxist love for elaborate projects, but does not detract from Lewites's efficiency at running the Sandinistas' tour operation. I and some Cuban-American tour agents from Miami who were there agreed that Montelimar could be made to work well by, say, Club Med. To admit Lewites was good at fleecing lefty tourists is not to defend Sandinismo.

It is grossly unfair for Weiner to suggest that I harbor "an accommodating attitude toward the previous regime," and it is gratuitous and nasty to bring up my past in the unions. My past has nothing to do with the issue of reportorial professionalism.

—Stephen Schwartz
San Francisco, California

Lauren Weiner replies:
Stephen Schwartz speaks of President Chamorro's "active and substantial steps to remove the army and police from Sandinista influence." He does not spell out these steps. Why? Because he is referring to a January presidential decree on military reform that is well intentioned, but a decidedly mixed bag. Mrs. Chamorro took the Sandinista label off the air force and the navy, and banned officers from holding political posts—both positive moves. But the constitutionally protected Popular Sandinista Army retains its name—and its command structure.

U.S. diplomats say the decree sounds like an assertion of presidential control, but would in fact weaken the power of a civilian defense minister to keep Gen. Humberto Ortega in line, assuming one is ever appointed (the position is now vacant).

Et Tu, Tom?
I have a suggestion for a future "Current Wisdom" entry:

The American Spectator
From *TAS*'s Washington correspondent—a voice blathering in the wilderness:

> And as I told the Stanford students, liberals should be more wary than they are of international organizations like the U.N., especially when they legitimize preemptive strikes on small countries because they might one day grow stronger. In its long-run consequences, smashing a small and distant country which did not and does not constitute a threat to our interests cannot be good for the United States. If America is to prevail in the world, we must do so by example, not by force.
> *[March 1991]*

—Tom Phelan
Ocean City, New Jersey

It was with deep sorrow that I learned of the diabolical kidnapping of *TAS*'s Washington correspondent, Tom Bethell, and his obvious replacement by Anthony Lewis. How else to explain his concluding comments about Operation Desert Storm, in which he denounces the U.S.'s "smashing a small and distant country which did not and does not constitute a threat to our interests"? Well, yeah, I guess you could describe Iraq as "small and distant," but it did have more tanks and artillery than the UK and France *combined*, and it *had* pursued an enormous and expensive program to develop chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons for over a decade, and it did have the fourth-largest store of weaponry in the *world*. As for threatening our interests, if the alleged Mr. Bethell does not understand why the possibility of a man like Saddam Hussein controlling 60 percent of the world's oil exports (not reserves) is a mortal threat, then it is beyond my powers to explain it to him.

Mr. Bethell-Lewis let his mask slip at the end, though, when he whimpered, "If America is to prevail in the world, we must do so by example, not by force." Yes, give appeasement a chance, Mr. Bethell-Lewis! You can't fool me: return the real Tom Bethell, and return him *now*.

—Philip Averbuck
Watertown, Massachusetts

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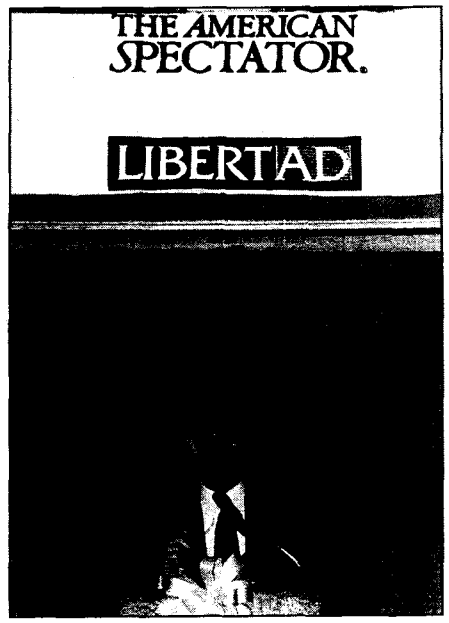
A WASHINGTON STORY

On February 20, 1991, The American Spectator *and Libertad hosted the magazine's annual dinner at Washington's Willard Hotel, the late President Grant's favorite watering hole. In a celebration of freedom honoring the magazine's Advisory Group and Washington Club members, master of ceremonies R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. tossed off Paul Wellstone jokes and introduced speakers Father James Higgins of Martinsville, Indiana, Charlton Heston,* TAS *Publisher Ronald E. Burr,* TAS *Managing Editor Wladyslaw Pleszczynski, and the evening's keynote orator, the Hon. Jack Kemp, secretary of housing and urban development. On concluding his remarks, Mr. Kemp presented the first annual* American Spectator*/Libertad Free Expression Award to Peter Kalikow, publisher of the* New York Post. *The following is adapted from Mr. Pleszczynski's tribute to our writers (photo opposite):*



I'll start with a Washington story. A friend recently told me that I should begin my talk by quoting Thomas Mann, who said that the one thing a writer can't get enough of is Vitamin P. My friend didn't come across this quote while actually reading Mann (which around here presumably is only done at the German embassy). He found it in an essay by Joseph Epstein, which means I'm passing it on to you third-hand. I hate to be so cavalier about literary provenance, but what else can you expect in Washington, where writers are never held in high regard, and where they learn to live without Vitamin P—i.e., praise. (I bet the locals were expecting me to say power.)

Tonight, let's make an exception. As we honor and thank our generous supporters and celebrate another year of publication, let's not overlook the writers whose contributions to our pages ultimately make or break each issue that we publish. Their work is probably the most difficult of all, and I just want to salute them for their lonely labors, dedication, and friendship.

In the past year more than a hundred individuals contributed to the magazine, ranging in experience from former President Richard Nixon to our editorial intern Mark Miller, who is now with the *Washington Times*. They ranged geographically from Maurice Cranston in Great Britain to Robert Stove in Australia to Piotr Brozyna and Anne Applebaum in Poland to the one and only Ben Stein in Malibu to Joe Queenan and Joe Mysak in downtown New York to Dave Shiflett in Denver, Colorado, to Susan Kristol in McLean, Virginia, to Elizabeth Kristol in Washington, D.C., to Dick Armey and Robert Kasten on Capitol Hill to Jim Pinkerton in the White House.

Of our regular monthly columnists, Tom Bethell hasn't missed an issue in nearly fifteen years, a record second only to Bob Tyrrell's. Drawing on his unique experience as a former newspaper editor and government spokesman, Terry Eastland in his insiderish Presswatch maintains the high standards established by his predecessors Michael Ledeen, Fred Barnes, and John O'Sullivan. Cathy Young, a native of Moscow and a graduate of Rutgers, has founded her own column, Soviet Presswatch, which is must reading if not exactly optimistic reading these days. James Bowman, a Floridian who spent the better part of the last two decades in England, is now working for the British press out of Washington and as our regular movie critic, replacing the distinguished Bruce Bawer.

Roving correspondent Micah Morrison has traveled the globe for us this past year, reporting from South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Nashville, Tennessee, and filing a memorable story on the plight of Kuwaiti refugees. Longtime contributor Fred Barnes provides political analysis that sends conservatives up walls and back to the drawing board. Michael Ledeen's astute and sober eye has kept us from falling for Gorby, not that the urge was ever strong. Our national correspondent Victor Gold has kept us both entertained and wistful for a time when politics was a red-meat affair. Which brings me to Robert Novak, whose review of *Men at Work* for us demonstrated that it is both fashionable and desirable to praise George Will in a conservative publication.

Super-reporters Michael Fumento and David Brock filled our pages with indispensable investigative work. (Though it seems each time David squishes a Larry Agran, a Paul Wellstone pops up.) As the correspondence section of our March issue suggests, Ralph Nader has yet to recover from the job Robert England did on him in our September issue.

Thanks to the generosity of the Bradley Foundation, we were able to send reporters to a number of hot spots, including German-speaking George Szamuely to a reunifying Germany, Thomas Mallon to San Quentin and later to the Rhode Island senatorial race, Andrew Ferguson to Louisiana for a definitive portrait of David Duke, facelift and all, Martha Bayles to a National Association of Scholars conference that helped launch a campus war against the politically correct thinking even liberal publications can no longer stomach (incidentally, Martha's review of Stanley Crouch's book, *Notes of a Hanging Judge*, was the best thing of its kind), and, finally, Algis Valiunas to Lithuania. Shortly before Christmas, at a meeting arranged by Rep. Christopher Cox, Chris Caldwell and I presented a copy of the issue with Mr. Valiunas's piece to visiting Lithuanian president Vytautas Landsbergis. I can report that he giggled softly when he saw the jackbooted Soviet soldier in the cover drawing.

National Review's Washington bureau chief William McGurn found time during one of his frequent trips to East Asia to file a major story from his favorite spot in the world—Manila—on the foreign aid scandals in the Philippines. P. J. O'Rourke, who as we speak is racing in his dune buggy across the Saudi desert, covered the Nicaraguan elections in our memorable May issue, which also featured Mary Eberstadt's delicious parody of Peggy Noonan's memoir. In November, P. J. commemorated Joe McCarthy's birthday with a new installment of the New Enemies List. For Tailgunner Joe's next birthday, P. J. promises a brand-new list featuring the names of prominent Iraqis mixed in with those of anti-war conservatives, CNN reporters, and Jordanians who appeared on "Nightline."

As for the names I've named tonight, they represent only a sampling of the writers who've done us proud. I thank all of them, named and unnamed. Special thanks, too, to Kenneth Lynn, George Gilder, John Simon, Tom Wolfe, Charlotte Allen, Aram Bakshian, Hugh Kenner, Adrian Karatnycky, Arch Puddington, John Train, Mark Falcoff, Doug Bandow, Edward Norden, Charles Horner, Frank Rocca, David Frum, Terry Jeffrey, Richard Brookhiser, Rick Marin, Lauren Weiner, Roger Starr, Steve Munson, Phil Terzian, Bill Tucker, John Dunlap, Franz Oppenheimer, Tim Ferguson, Stephen Schwartz, Hastings Wyman, Peter Hannaford, and Jeremy Rabkin. Finally, let me thank the finest proofreader in existence, Jenny Woodward. Together with our writers, she makes mine the easiest reading job in Washington. God bless them all or, as the case may be, God help them. —*WP*

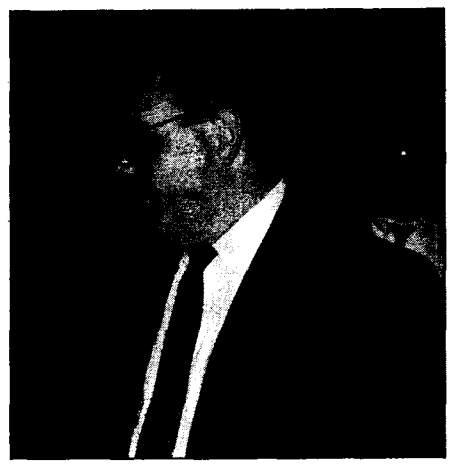
My Hanh Burr, Charlton Heston, and Ronald Burr. (Who's the mugger in the background?)

The American Spectator's Advisory Group and Washington Club are associations of financial supporters who contribute $1,000 or more annually to the American Spectator Educational Foundation in support of the general operating overhead of the magazine and its intern programs. For more information on how you can join, attend parties, partake in camaraderie of like-minded people while enjoying free booze, high cholesterol food, cigarettes, cigars, and all the other evil stuff that the federal government wants to suppress, write: Ronald E. Burr, The American Spectator, P.O. Box 549, Arlington, Virginia 22216-0549.

Denise Ferguson, thinking about her men at home.

Anne Tyrrell and Nikki Gibbs, staying up late.

Susan Kristol greets Judge & Mrs. Robert Bork.



William McGurn, National Review*'s man in Washington.*

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Jack Kemp and dinner organizer Pam Young.

Fred Barnes and Franz Oppenheimer, contributors.

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Novak.

Elliott Abrams and Jack Kemp, small d *democrats.*

CIA Director William Webster recruits a spook.

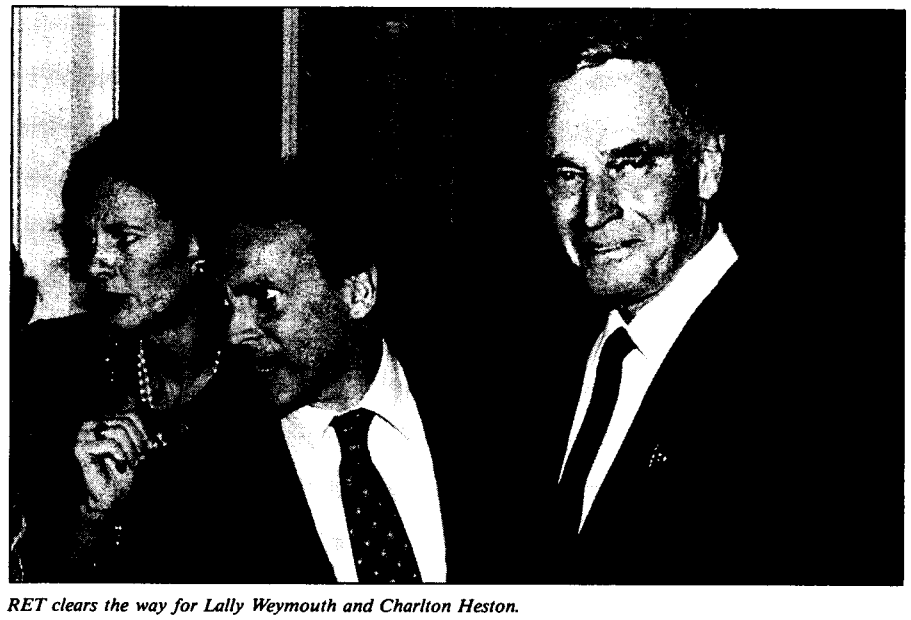
Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, Lithuania on his mind.

William Kristol and Baron von Kannon discuss Huntington, Indiana.

Jack Kemp and Robert Novak, a capital gang.

Patrick Tyrrell with his dad and Rep. Phil Crane.

Gertrude Himmelfarb and Edward Luttwak: Let the ground war begin.



RET clears the way for Lally Weymouth and Charlton Heston.

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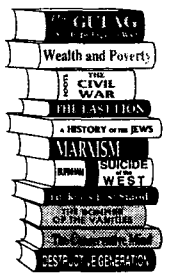

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CURRENT WISDOM

Santa Barbara News-Press

Still more evidence that Santa Barbara is the fla-fla center of America:

I would like to know how Iraq's colonization of Kuwait differs from the pilgrims' colonization of this country when its only inhabitants were native Americans.

To avoid hypocrisy, must we not return to where we come from so that the native Americans' land can be returned to them?

—Greg Bristol
Santa Barbara
[February 15, 1991]

New York Times Magazine

Fresh from Bughouse Square, the T. S. Eliot of our day:

"I haven't been outside in 72 hours," Ross murmurs in his throaty Edinburgh burr. Born in Scotland, Ross is a 34-year-old Marxist scholar of American popular culture who was recently recommended by Princeton's department of English for tenure. A former roustabout on North Sea oil platforms as well as the former butler of the great-grandson of Giuseppe Verdi in Berkeley, Calif., Ross has so far produced three books and 50 articles, his subjects ranging from Batman comics and computer hackers to new-age trance channeling and the semiotics of the Weather Channel.

For Ross, as for other rising stars in contemporary literary criticism, a good M.L.A. means hurtling between panel and symposium, publishing party and cash bar, seeing and being seen. Tall, lean, with saturnine good looks, Ross attracts attention wherever he goes. "That's him!" comes a reverent whisper from a group of graduate students nearby. "That's Andrew Ross!"

[February 10, 1991]

Washington Post

The *Post*'s intrepid reporter Sue Anne Pressley ventures into the American Heart of Darkness and meets two New Age natives:

On Katharine Brainard's "divorce quilt" is something that looks like a dead cat—a furry brown beast with black tire tracks running across its broken back.

"It's what my ex-husband's girlfriend, whose name was Kitty, would look like if she got run over," Brainard said blithely. . . .

Brainard, a fabric artist who teaches classes on "emotions and quilting," said the piece became her therapy after her marriage fell apart in late 1989. She has had so much response, she said, that she would not be surprised to see a divorce-quilt fad spring up among recent victims of failed relationships. . . .

Brainard's ex-husband said he views the work, after some difficulty, as "a healing quilt. . . . Overall, it was a way of working through a tough time in her life, our lives."

The divorce quilt is on sale for $5,000.

[March 16, 1991]

Village Voice

Historic action on both sides of the television screen, as reported by an exultant sociopath in the employ of the intellectual *Village Voice*:

There's a lot of kissing on *L.A. Law*, but one smooch on last Thursday's episode made history. When C. J., the cute Brit associate, kissed Abby the girl-lawyer-next-door and got ambiguously kissed back, I jumped up and down in front of the TV: for all the fantasies lesbians have about Cagney and Lacey, this was the first time I'd seen two prime-time women kiss on the mouth. By the commercial break, my phone was ringing off the hook. It was one of those televised moments you know you'll tell your grandchildren about, like the Kennedy assassination or the gulf war, only *good*.

[February 19, 1991]

Presbyterian Layman

The Rev. James Nelson, professor of ethics at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and a minister of the United Church of Christ, puts in a good word for the scortatory arts:

Nelson's views on marital fidelity are spelled out in *Embodiment*. "An increasing number of couples are reflecting sexual exclusiveness as essential to marriage and are seeing intimate 'satellite' relationships as positively supporting both marriage and personal growth," he says. He counsels readers not to assume that "the 'correct' form of marriage and family life is eternal and unchanging in the Christian experience" and he suggests that the church should rethink what it means by fidelity.

Nelson argues that a distinction should be made between "infidelity" and "adultery." He entertains the possibility that marital fidelity and adultery are compatible. ". . . fidelity is the enduring commitment to the spouse's well-being and growth. It is commitment to the primacy of the marital relationship over any other. Compatible with marital fidelity and supportive of it can be certain secondary relationships of some emotional and sensual depth, possibly including genital intercourse."

[January/February, 1991]

Santa Barbara News-Press

Another philosophical treatise from Don of Goleta:

To me, cheerleading is an outdated, overrated and, frankly, degrading thing for young women (and some men) to do.

I am surprised that it has survived, in its present form, through American social-change movements such as the women's movement.

The Central Coast has experienced alleged abuse of high school cheerleaders; allegations that UCSB's cheerleaders were, at one time, required to stand on a bathroom scale before practice; and questions about recruiting practices that exclude underrepresented students.

These incidents, in my mind, ought to cause our communities to take a look at what value cheerleading brings to our society.

Cheerleading generally reinforces dangerous stereotypes of unrealistically weighted females. The unchanging cheers, slogans and dance steps don't seem to have a place in the culturally and physically diverse 1990s.

Rather than female hundred-pounders in Spandex, let's have males and females in a variety of bodies and dress doing ethnic dance, creative poetry, maybe some basic chaotic running around and yelling.

The dangers of cheerleading as it is include terrible gender stereotypes, eating disorders and the not-so-subtle degradation of the wonderful women and men of the area.

Let's set a national precedent—get rid of cheerleading and replace it with an up-to-date alternative.

—Don Lubrach
Goleta
[February 16, 1991]

Canberra Times

Rough stuff among the saintly:

Canberra police are investigating an allegation of sexual assault by a member of a World Council of Churches delegation on a member of another country's delegation.

It has been alleged a male member of a delegation asked another delegate to perform oral sex with him. When she refused, the man allegedly struck her about the head until she did. The man allegedly said he wanted sex the way it was performed in his own country.

Australian Federal Police refused to comment on the allegations yesterday.

[February 19, 1991]

Washington Post

Mary McGrory, two weeks after the Persian Gulf War and still on automatic pilot:

They cheered the Tomahawk missiles. They hung yellow ribbons. Bloodthirstiness, decked with sentimentality, was the national mood.

The war showed the American public the kind of president it likes, commanding, headstrong, implacable—and above all lucky. Bush had shown his ruthless streak in his campaign against Michael Dukakis, slamming him with inaccurate charges and innuendoes about his patriotism. War let him show his toughness on the world scene. Democrats despondently talk of canceling their convention bookings. Only a catastrophe could offer them light at the end of the tunnel.

"We had to sit there and take it," said a Democratic congressman who had clapped his palms sore and leapt often from his seat, sometimes preemptively.

[March 11, 1991]

Washington Post

In a spontaneous utterance, Peter Arnett shows himself to be one part cub reporter, one part sly boulevardier:

I'd go anywhere for a story if there was enough viewer interest and CNN wanted coverage. I'd go to Hell itself for a story if someone important down there wanted to be interviewed. But then, the labelers would probably declare I was down there because I was an atheist.

[March 17, 1991]

Good Times
(Santa Cruz, California)

Proof that the Ford Foundation remains active in the field of medical research:

Trichotillomania, or compulsive hair pulling disorder, is the focus of a new learning center in Santa Cruz. The Trichotillomania Learning Center on Mission Street opened its doors on Jan. 1 to educate people about this little-known disease. . . .

Dubowski cites National Institute of Mental Health figures that about 8 million Americans suffer from trichotillomania. She says that people don't often hear of the disease because victims are in a "shame bind."

"Lots of people are pulling their hair, but everyone thinks they're the only ones," Dubowski says. "Having never heard of it, they assume they're alone and are too self-conscious to ask for help. And until recently there has been no treatment."

Dubowski emphasizes that trichotillomaniacs are "not people who sit and just play with their hair."

"If you're pulling your hair and it causes discomfort, and you can't stop the behavior even though you want to—you probably have it," Dubowski says.

[February 28, 1991]

Los Angeles Daily News

Notice of a book about the life of Siamese twins? Guess again and be edified in the New Age:

Daddy and Frank live together. Work together. Clean house together. Shave together.

And, like other parents, Daddy and Frank sleep together.

Daddy and Frank are characters in "Daddy's Roommate" (Alyson Publications; $14.95), one in a new line of books for and about children of gays.

Daddy and Frank do embrace each other a few times, but most of the book is about beach trips, playing baseball and catching bugs.

"I wanted to keep it warm and familiar, not at all threatening or radical," said Willhoite, who lives in Boston. "The whole idea of divorce is scary to children. And then you throw in this extra thing. So you want to be as reassuring as you can."

[February 5, 1991]

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